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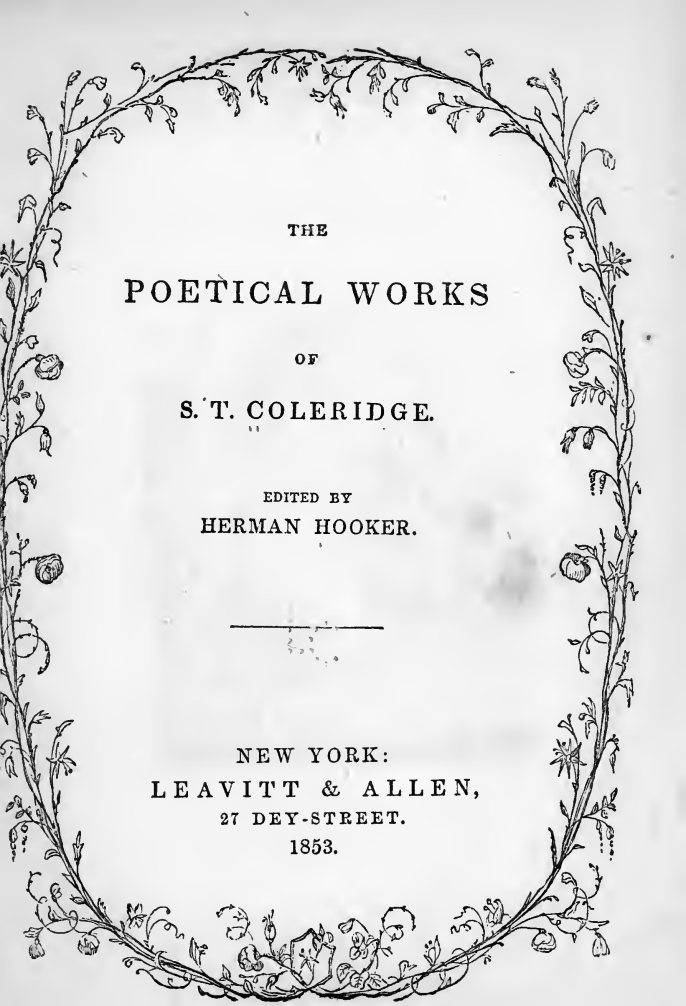




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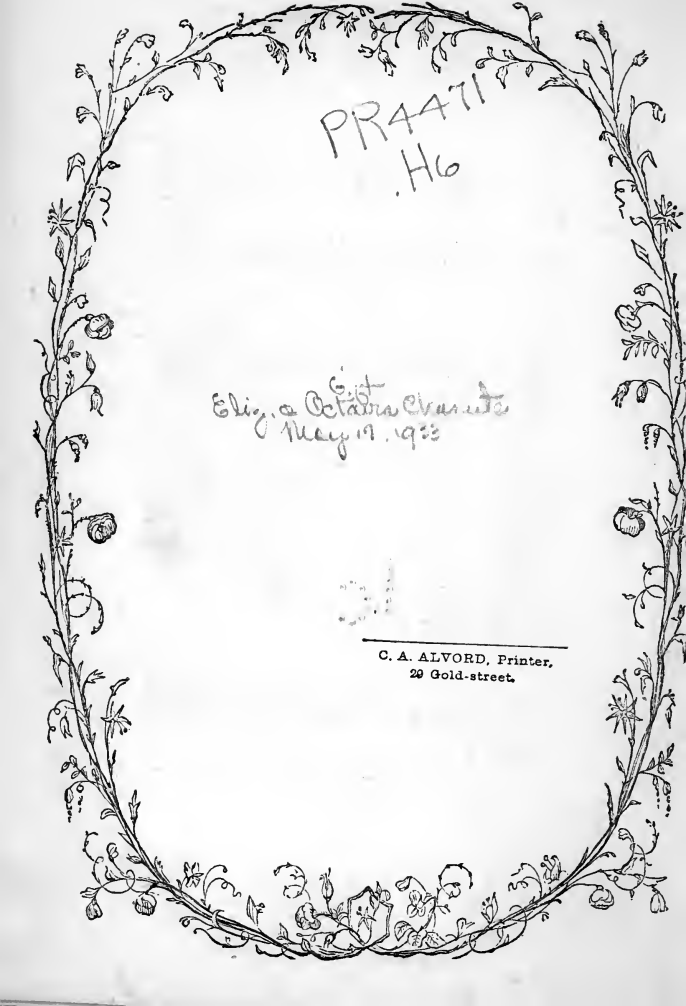
Illustration of a man and a woman sitting on a bench under a trellis of vines in a garden.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
S. T. COLERIDGE.

EDITED BY
HERMAN HOOKER.

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PREFACE.

COMPOSITIONS resembling those of the present volume are not unfrequently condemned for their querulous Egotism. But Egotism is to be condemned, then, only when it offends against Time and Place, as in an History or an Epic Poem. To censure it in a Monody or Sonnet is almost as absurd as to dislike a circle for being round. Why, then, write Sonnets or Monodies? Because they give me pleasure when perhaps nothing else could. After the more violent emotions of Sorrow, the mind demands amusement, and can find it in employment alone; but, full of its late sufferings, it can endure no employment not in some measure connected with them. Forcibly to turn away our attention to general subjects, is a painful and most often an unavailing effort.

But O! how grateful to a wounded heart
The tale of misery to impart—

From others' eyes bid artless sorrows flow,
And raise esteem upon the base of woe!

SHAW.

The communicativeness of our nature leads us to describe our own sorrows; in the endeavour to describe them, intellectual activity is exerted; and from intellectual activity there results a pleasure, which is gradually associated, and mingles as a corrective, with the painful subject of the description. "True!" (it may be answered,) "but how are the PUBLIC interested in your Sorrows or your Description?" We are for ever attributing personal Unities to imaginary Aggregates.—What is the PUBLIC, but a term for a number of scattered individuals? of whom as many will be interested in these sorrows as have experienced the same or similar.

Holy be the lay
Which mourning soothes the mourner on his way.

If I could judge of others by myself, I should not hesitate to affirm, that the most interesting passages in our most interesting Poems are those in which the Author develops his own feelings. The sweet voice of Cona* never

* Ossian.

sounds so sweetly, as when it speaks of itself; and I should almost suspect that man of an unkindly heart, who could read the opening of the third book of the *Paradise Lost* without peculiar emotion. By a law of our Nature, he, who labours under strong feeling, is impelled to seek for sympathy; but a Poet's feelings are all strong.—*Quicquid amet valde amat.*—Akenside therefore speaks with philosophical accuracy when he classes Love and Poetry, as producing the same effects:—

Love and the wish of Poets when their tongue
Would teach to others' bosoms, what so charms
Their own.*

There is one species of Egotism which is truly disgusting; not that which leads us to communicate our feelings to others, but that which would reduce the feelings of others to an identity with our own. The Atheist, who exclaims, "Pshaw," when he glances his eye on the praises of Deity, is an Egotist: an old man, when he speaks contemptuously of Love-verses, is an Egotist: and the sleek Favourites of For-

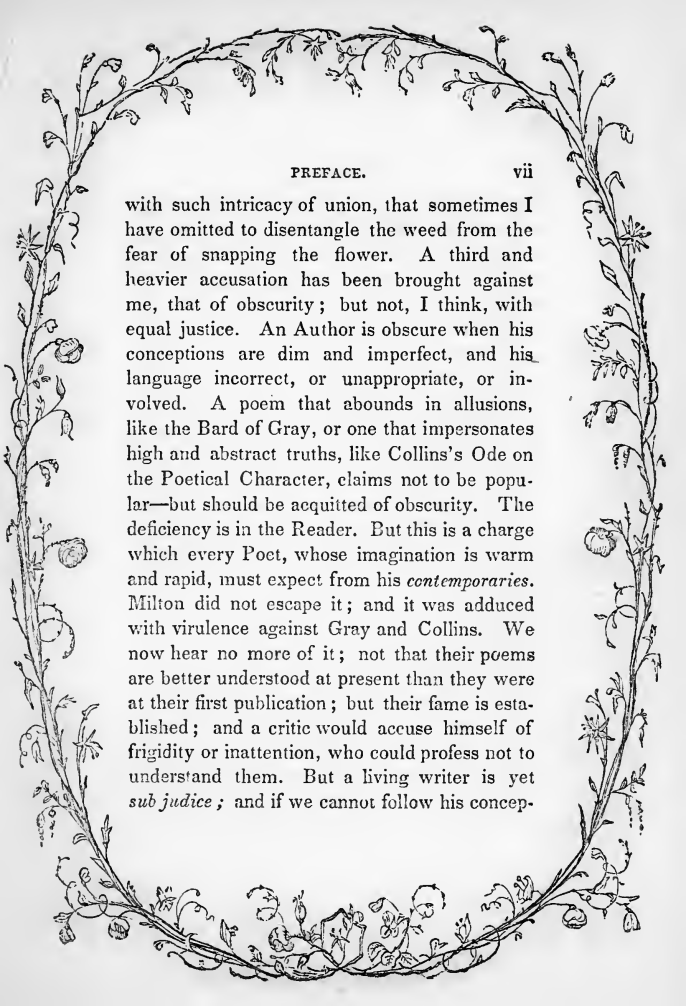
* Pleasures of Imagination

tune are Egotists, when they condemn all “ melancholy, discontented ” verses. Surely it would be candid not merely to ask whether the poem pleases ourselves, but to consider whether or no there may not be others, to whom it is well calculated to give an innocent pleasure.

I shall only add, that each of my readers will, I hope, remember that these Poems on various subjects, which he reads at one time, and under the influence of one set of feelings, were written at different times, and prompted by very different feelings ; and therefore that the supposed inferiority of one Poem to another may sometimes be owing to the temper of mind in which he happens to peruse it.

S. T. C.

My Poems have been rightly charged with a profusion of double epithets, and a general turgidness. I have pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand ; and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction. This latter fault, however, had insinuated itself into my Religious Musings



with such intricacy of union, that sometimes I have omitted to disentangle the weed from the fear of snapping the flower. A third and heavier accusation has been brought against me, that of obscurity; but not, I think, with equal justice. An Author is obscure when his conceptions are dim and imperfect, and his language incorrect, or unappropriate, or involved. A poem that abounds in allusions, like the Bard of Gray, or one that impersonates high and abstract truths, like Collins's Ode on the Poetical Character, claims not to be popular—but should be acquitted of obscurity. The deficiency is in the Reader. But this is a charge which every Poet, whose imagination is warm and rapid, must expect from his *contemporaries*. Milton did not escape it; and it was adduced with virulence against Gray and Collins. We now hear no more of it; not that their poems are better understood at present than they were at their first publication; but their fame is established; and a critic would accuse himself of frigidity or inattention, who could profess not to understand them. But a living writer is yet *sub judice*; and if we cannot follow his concep-

tions, or enter into his feelings, it is more consoling to our pride to consider him as lost beneath, than as soaring above, us. If any man expect from my poems the same easiness of style which he admires in a drinking-song, for him I have not written. *Intelligibilia, non intellectum adfero.*

I expect neither profit or general fame by my writings; and I consider myself as having been amply repaid without either. Poetry has been to me its own "exceeding great reward:" it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the Good and the Beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me.



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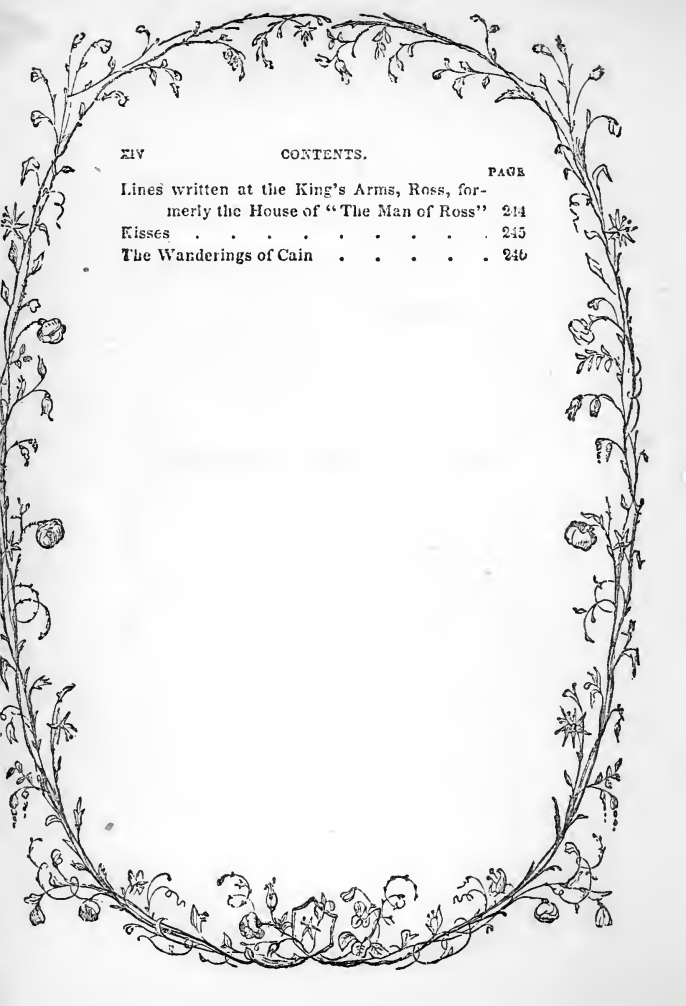
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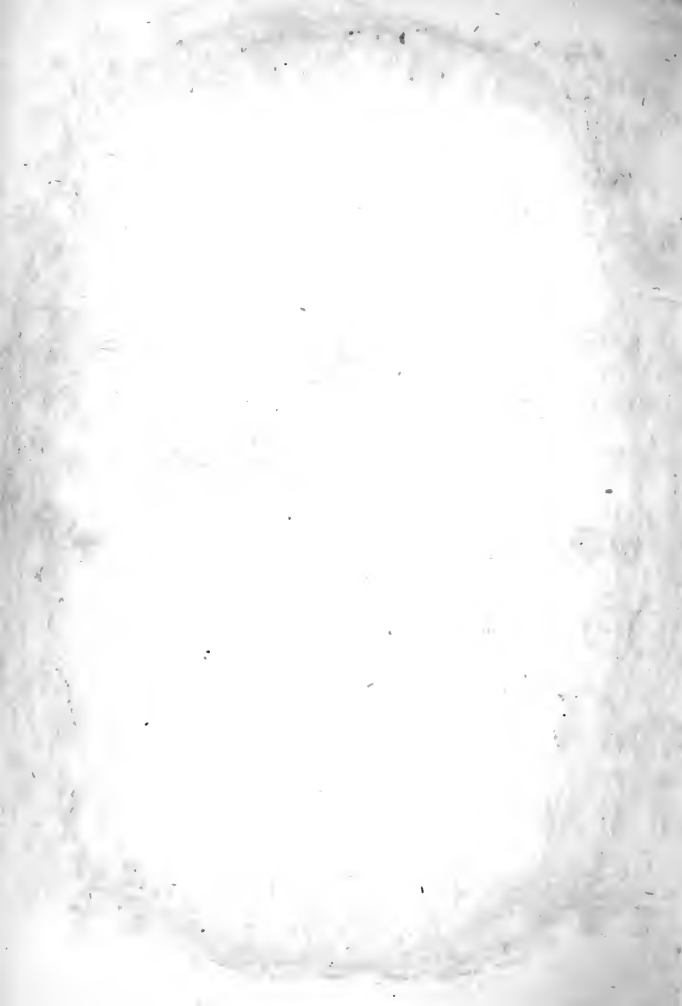
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A decorative floral wreath border surrounds the text. The wreath is composed of several intertwined branches, likely of a climbing plant like a grapevine or ivy. The branches are covered with small, pointed leaves and clusters of small, five-petaled flowers. Some of the flowers are in full bloom, while others are buds. The overall style is a classic woodcut or engraved illustration.

THE ANCIENT MARINER.





THE ANCIENT MARINER.

PART I.

It is an ancient mariner,¹
And he stoppeth one of three,
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me ?

"The bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin ;
The guests are met, the feast is set :
Mayst hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon !
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye²—
The wedding-guest stood still,
And listens like a three-years' child :
The Mariner hath his will.

The wedding-guest sat on a stone :
He cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light-house top.

The sun came up upon the left,³
Out of the sea came he ;
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—
The wedding-guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the ha',⁴
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads, before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The wedding-guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the storm-blast came and he ⁵
Was tyrannous and strong ;
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts, and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts, the snowy cliffs ⁶
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled
Like noises in a swound.

At length did cross an albatross, ⁷
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew,
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steered us through !

And a good south-wind sprung up behind ;^s
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine ;
Whiles all the night, thro' fog smoke white
Glimmered the white moon-shine.

“ God save thee, ancient Mariner !⁹
From the fiends, that plague thee thus !—
Why look'st thou so ? ” — With my cross-bow
I shot the albatross.

PART II.

THE sun now rose upon the right :
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south-wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,¹
And it would work 'em woe ;
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow ;
Ah, wretch ! said they, the bird to slay
That made the breeze to blow !

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,²
The glorious sun uprist ;
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist,
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,³
The furrow followed free ;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,⁴
'Twas sad as sad could be ;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,⁵
And all the boards did shrink :
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be ;
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout,
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burn green, and blue, and white.

And some in dreams assured were⁶
Of the spirit that plagued so ;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought
Was withered at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks ⁷
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III.

THERE past a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye,
A weary time ! a weary time !
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld ¹
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist ;
It moved, and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape I wist,
And still it neared and neared :

As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged, and tacked, and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could not laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood;
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call;
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,³
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

See! see! (I cried), she tacks no more!⁴
Hither, to work us weal,
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun.⁵

And straight the sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her ribs through which the sun⁶
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,⁷
Her locks were yellow as gold;
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-Mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks men's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,⁸
And the twain were casting dice;
"The game is done! I've won, I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:⁹
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,¹⁰

The steersman's face by his lamp gleamce
white,
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged moon,¹¹
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men,¹²
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
'They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,¹³—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

PART IV.

" I FEAR thee, ancient Mariner !¹
I fear thy skinny hand !
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,*
As is the ribbed sea-sand !

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown."—
Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest !²
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all, alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea !
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The merry men, so beautiful !³
And they all dead did lie ;
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on : and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away :

* For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed.

I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.⁴

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray ;
But or ever a prayer had gush't,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat,
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they ;
The look with which they looked on me ⁵
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high ;
But oh ! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye !
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving moon went up the sky,⁶
And no where did abide ;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside.

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt away
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,⁷
I watched the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire ;
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam : and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things ! no tongue⁸
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware :⁹
Sure my kind saint took pity on me
And I blessed them unaware.

The self-same moment I could pray :
And from my neck so free
The albatross fell off, and sunk¹⁰
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

ON sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,¹
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew,
And when I awoke it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs,
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind;²
It did not come a-near;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life,
And a hundred fire-flashes seen;

To and fro they were hurried about,
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud,
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side ;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on !
Beneath the lightning and the moon³
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen these dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on,
Yet never a breeze upblew ;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do ;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me knee to knee :
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me.

" I fear thee, ancient Mariner !"
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain, ⁴
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms
And clustered round the mast ;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound
Then darted to the sun ;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed : now one by one.

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute,
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook,
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,⁵
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid ; and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean :
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound ;
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

How long in that same fit I lay,⁶
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
'Two voices in the air.

“Is it he?” quoth one, “Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless albatross.

“The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man,
Who shot him with his bow.”

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew :
Quoth he, “The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.”

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

BUT tell me, tell me ! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast ?
What is the Ocean doing ?

SECOND VOICE.

Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast ;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast.

If he may know which way to go,
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.

FIRST VOICE.

But why drives on that ship so fast,¹
Without or wave or wind?

SECOND VOICE.

The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated!
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.

I woke, and we were sailing on,²
As in a gentle weather;
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter;
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away;
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt ; once more³
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made ;
Its path was not upon the sea
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek,
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly, flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too ;
Sweetly, sweetly, blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this, indeed,⁴
The light-house top I see ?
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake my God!
Or let me sleep away.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn;
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock;
The moonlight steeped in silentness,
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,⁵
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow⁶
Those crimson shadows were;
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And by the holy rood,
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band each waved his hand,
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sunk
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast;
Dear Lord in Heaven, it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice,
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood,
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The albatross's blood.

PART VII.

THIS Hermit good lives in that wood¹
Which slopes down to the sea,
How loudly his sweet voice he rears !
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, at eve—
He hath a cushion plump,
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk
“ Why, this is strange, I trow
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now ? ”

“ Strange, by my faith ! ” the Hermit said²—
“ And they answered not our cheer !
The planks look warped ! and see these sails,
How thin they are and sere !
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

“ Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along ;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below
That eats the she-wolf’s young . ”

“ Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared’—“ Push on, push on !”
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred ;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on ;
Still louder and more dread ;
It reached the ship, it split the bay ;
The ship went down like lead.³

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,⁴
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that has been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat ;
But swift as dreams myself I found
Within the Pilot’s boat.

Upon the whirl, where sunk the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked,
And fell down in a fit ;
The Holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while,
His eyes went to and fro,
"Ha ! Ha !" quoth he, " full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land !
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

" O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !" ⁵
The Hermit crossed his brow,
" Say quick," quoth he, " I bid thee say
What manner of man art thou ?"

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale ;
And then it left me free.

Since then at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns :
And till my ghastly tale is told ;
This heart within me burns.

I pass like night from land to land : ⁶
I have strange power of speech ;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me :
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door !
The wedding-guests are there :
But in the garden bower the bride
And bridemaids singing are :
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer !

Oh Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea ;
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk,
With a goodly company !

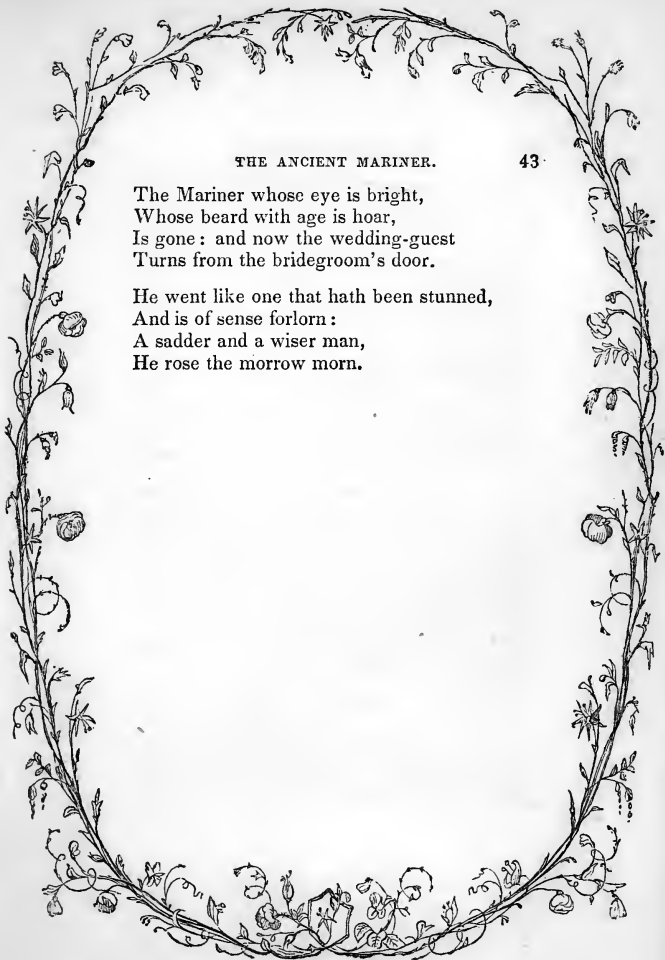
To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay !

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man, and bird, and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best,
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God that loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone : and now the wedding-guest
Turns from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.



NOTES TO PART I.

1 An ancient mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

2 The wedding-guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

3 The mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

4 The wedding-guest heareth the bridal-music ; but the mariner continueth his tale.

5 The ship drawn by a storm toward the south pole.

6 The land of ice and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen.

7 Till a Great sea-bird, called the albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

8 And lo! the albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

9 The ancient mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

NOTES TO PART II.

1 His shipmates cry out against the ancient mariner for killing the bird of good luck

2 But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

3 The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward even till it reaches the line.

4 The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

5 And the albatross begins to be avenged.

6 A spirit had followed them, one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels: concerning whom the learned Jew Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

7 The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the Ancient Mariner; in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird around his neck.

NOTES TO PART III.

1 The Ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

2 At the nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship, and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

3 A flash of joy.

4 And horror follows; for can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

5 It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

6 And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting sun. The spectre woman and her death-mate, and no other, on board the skeleton ship.

7 Like vessel like crew.

8 Death, and Life-in-Death, have dived for the ship's crew; she (the latter,) winneth the Ancient Mariner.

9 No twilight within the courts of the sun.

10 At the rising of the moon,

11 One after another,

12 His ship-mates drop down dead;

13 But Life-in-Death begins her work on the Ancient Mariner.

NOTES TO PART IV.

1 The wedding-guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him;

2 But the Ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

3 He despiseth the creatures of the calm;

4 And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

5 But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

6 In his loneliness and fixedness, he yearneth towards the journeying moon, and the stars that still sojourn yet still move onward, and every where the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country, and their own natural

homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

7 By the light of the moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm ;

8 Their beauty and their happiness.

9 He blessed them in his heart.

10 The spell begins to break.

NOTES TO PART V.

1 By grace of the Holy Mother the Ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

2 He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the elements.

3 The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on.

4 But not by the souls of the men, nor by demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

5 The lonesome spirit from the South Pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

6 The Polar Spirit's fellow demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong, and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the Ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

NOTES TO PART VI.

1 The Mariner hath been cast into a trance ; or the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life can endure.

2 The supernatural motion is retarded ; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

3 The curse is finally expiated ;

4 And the Ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

5 The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

6 And appear in their own forms of light.

NOTES TO PART VII.

1 The Hermit of the Wood,

2 Approacheth the ship with wonder.

3 The ship suddenly sinketh.

4 The Ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

5 The Ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him, and the penance of life falls on him :

6 And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

7 And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

CHRISTABEL.

PART I.

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock ;
Tu—whit !——Tu—whoo !
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch ;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud ;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark ?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full ;
And yet she looks both small and dull.

The night is chill, the cloud is gray :
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the woods so late,
A furlong from the castle gate ?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight ;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak,
But moss and rarest mistletoe :
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel !
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is, she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill ; the forest bare ;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?
There is not wind enough in the air

To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel !
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.

What sees she there ?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Dressed in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone :
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly !

Mary mother, save me now !
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou ?

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet :-

Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness :
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear !
Said Christabel, How camest thou here ?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and
sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet :—

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine :
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white :
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be ;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke :
He placed me underneath this oak ;
He swore they would return with haste ;
Whither they went I cannot tell—

I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she,)
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand
And comforted fair Geraldine :
O well, bright dame ! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline ;
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel :
All our household are at rest,
The hall is silent as the cell ;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth,
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well ;

A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate ;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate :
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side ;
Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress !
Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make !
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel,

Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :
But what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall that echoes stil,
Pass as lightly as you will !
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying ;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
O softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And, jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the baron's room,
And still as death with stifled breath !
And now have reached her chamber door ;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,

Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet :
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.
The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn ?
Christabel answered—Woe is me !
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding day.
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !
I would, said Geraldine, she were !
But soon with altered voice, said she—
“ Off, wandering mother ! Peak and pine !

I have power to bid thee flee."
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
"Off, woman off! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady! it hath bewildered you!
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, "'tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countree.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden to requite you well.

For now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

Quoth Christabel, so let it be!
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain, of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side—
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,

And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;
Then suddenly 'as one defied
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the maiden's side !—
And in her arms the maid she took,

Ah well-a-day !

And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say :
In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel !
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-
morrow

This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;

But vainly thou warrest,

For this is alone in

Thy power to declare,

That in the dim forest

Thou heard'st a low moaning,

And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair :
And didst bring her home with thee in love and
in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.

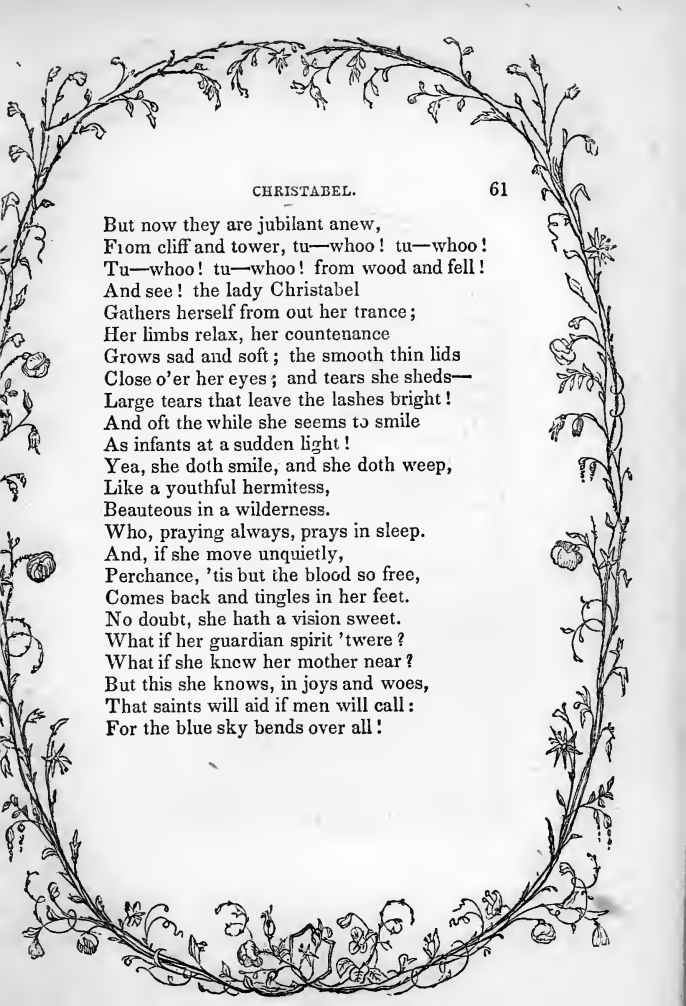
THE CONCLUSION TO PART I.

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree.

Amid the jagged shadows
Of mossy leafless boughs,
Kneeling in the moonlight,
To make her gentle vows ;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast ;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me !)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree ?
And lo ! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine ! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine ! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.



But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!
Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell!
And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!
Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness.
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere?
What if she knew her mother near?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

PART II.

EACH matin bell, the baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead :
These words Sir Leoline will say,
Many a morn to his dying day !

And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke—a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, so let it knell !
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can !
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother ;

And oft too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a mery peal from Borodale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud
That merry peal comes ringing loud;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.
“Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
I trust that you have rested well.”

And Christabel awoke and spied
The same who lay down by her side—
O rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!
For she belike hath drunken deep
Of all the blessedness of sleep!
And while she spake, her looks, her air
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
“Sure I have sinned!” said Christabel,
“Now heaven be praised if all be well!”

And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet
With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom,
Enter the baron's presence room.

The baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted—ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face:
And the youthful lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide
With trump and solemn heraldry,

That they who thus had wronged the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy !
“ And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney-court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men !”
He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !
For the lady was ruthlessly seized : and he
kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend !

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain !
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again,—
(Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see ?)
Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound ,
Whereat the knight turned wildly round,
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,
"What ails then my beloved child?"
The baron said—His daughter mild
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she feared, she had offended
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
And with such lowly tones she prayed,
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!
Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
"Ho! Bracy, the bard, the charge be thine!
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best

To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.
And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
My merry bard ! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,
And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

“ Bard Bracy ! Bard Bracy ! your horses are
fleet,
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
More loud than your horses' echoing feet !
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall !
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
He bids thee come without delay
With all thy numerous array ;
And take thy lovely daughter home :
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array
White with their panting palfreys' foam :
And by mine honour ! I will say,
That I repent me of the day
When I spake words of fierce disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine !—

—For since that evil hour hath flown,
Many a summer's sun hath shone ;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ;
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
His gracious hail on all bestowing !
"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my heart can tell ;
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
This day my journey should not be,
So strange a dream hath come to me ;
That I had vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warned by a vision in my rest !
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird whom thou dost love
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
Sir Leoline ! I saw the same
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wondered what might ail the bird ;
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the
old tree.

“ And in my dream methought I went
To search out what might there be found ;
And what the sweet bird’s trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry ;
But yet for her dear lady’s sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo ! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck,
Green as the herbs on which it couched ;
Close by the dove’s its head it crouched ;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swells hers !
I woke ; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower ;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye !
And thence I vowed this self-same day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there.”

Thus Bracy said : the baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile ;
Then turned to lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love ;

And said in courtly accents fine,
"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"
He kissed her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine, in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
She turned her from Sir Leoline;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast,
And looked askance at Christabel—
Jesu Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of
dread,

At Christabel she looked askance!—
One moment—and the sight was fled!
But Christabel in busy trance
Stumbling on the unsteady ground
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,

She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one!
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind;
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate!
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
Still picturing that look askance
With forced unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view—
As far as such a look could be,
In eyes so innocent and blue!
And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused a while, and inly prayed:
Then falling at the baron's feet,
“By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away!”
She said: and more she could not say:
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.
Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child

Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild ;
The same for whom thy lady died !
O by the pangs of her dear mother
Think thou no evil of thy child !
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died ;
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride :
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled
Sir Leoline !
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine ?

Within the baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild.
Dishonoured thus in his old age ;
Dishonoured by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the wrong'd daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He rolled his eyes with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,

And said in tones abrupt, austere—
“ Why, Bracy ! dost thou loiter here ?
I bade thee hence ! ” The bard obeyed ;—
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine !

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II.

A LITTLE child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light ;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other ;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin



CHRISTABEL.

75

(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

GENEVIEVE.

MAID of my Love, sweet Genevieve
In Beauty's light you glide along :
Your eye is like the star of eve,
And sweet your voice, as seraph's song.
Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
This heart with passion soft to glow :
Within your soul a voice there lives !
It bids you hear the tale of woe.
When sinking low the sufferer wan
Beholds no hand outstretch'd to save,
Fair, as the bosom of the swan
That rises graceful o'er the wave,
I've seen your breast with pity heave,
And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve !

SONNET.

TO THE AUTUMNAL MOON.

MILD splendour of the various-vested night !
Mother of wildly-working visions ! hail !
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light
Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil.

And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud
Behind the gathered blackness lost on high ;
And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
Thy placid lightning o'er the awakened sky,
Ah such is Hope ! as changeful and as fair !
Now dimly peering on the wistful sight ;
Now hid behind the dragon-winged Despair :
But soon emerging in her radiant might,
She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
Sails, like a meteor kindling in its flight.

THE RAVEN.

A CHRISTMAS TALE, TOLD BY A SCHOOLBOY TO
HIS LITTLE BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

UNDERNEATH an old oak tree
There was of swine a huge company,
That grunted as they crunched the mast :
For that was ripe, and fell full fast.
Then they trotted away, for the wind grew high :
One acorn they left, and no more might you spy.
Next came a raven that liked not such folly :
He belonged, they did say, to the witch Melan-
choly !
Blacker was he than blackest jet,
Flew low in the rain, and his feathers not wet.

He picked up the acorn and buried it straight
By the side of a river both deep and great.

Where then did the raven go ?

He went high and low,

Over hill, over dale, did the black raven go.

Many autumns, many springs

Travelled he with wandering wings :

Many summers, many winters—

I can't tell half his adventures.

At length he came back, and with him a she,
And the acorn was grown to a tall oak tree.
They built them a nest in the topmost bough,
And young ones they had, and were happy
enow.

But soon came a woodman in leathern guise,
His brow, like a pent-house, hung over his
eyes.

He'd an axe in his hand, not a word he spoke,
But with many a hem ! and a sturdy stroke,
At length he brought down the poor raven's
own oak.

His young ones were killed ; for they could not
depart,

And their mother did die of a broken heart.

The boughs from the trunk the woodman did
sever :

And they floated down on the course of the
river.

They sawed it in planks, and its bark they did strip,
And with this tree and others they made a good ship.
The ship, it was launched; but in sight of the land
Such a storm there did rise as no ship could withstand.
It bulged on a rock, and the waves rushed in fast:
Round and round flew the raven, and cawed to the blast.
He heard the last shriek of the perishing souls—
See! see! o'er the topmast the mad water rolls!
Right glad was the raven, and off he went fleet,
And Death riding home on a cloud he did meet,
And he thank'd him again and again for this treat:
They had taken his all, and revenge it was sweet!

MUSIC.

HENCE, soul-dissolving Harmony
That lead'st th' oblivious soul astray—
Though thou sphere-descended be—
Hence away!—

Thou mightier goddess, thou demand'st my lay
Born when earth was seiz'd with cholic ;
Or as more sapient sages say,
What time the legion diabolic
Compelled their beings to enshrine
In bodies vile of herded swine,
Precipitate adown the steep
With hideous rout were plunging in the
deep,

And hog and devil mingling grunt and yell
Seiz'd on the ear with horrible obtrusion ;—
Then if aright old legendaries tell,
Wert thou begot by Discord or Confusion !

What tho' no name's sonorous power
Was given thee at thy natal hour !—
Yet oft I feel thy sacred might,
While concords wing their distant flight.
Such power inspires thy holy son
Sable clerk of Tiverton.

And oft where Otter sports his stream,
I hear thy banded offspring scream.
Thou Goddess ! thou inspir'st each throat .
'Tis thou who pour'st the scritch-owl note !
Transported hear'st thy children all
Scrape and blow and squeak and squall,
And while old Otter's steeple rings,
Clappest hoarse thy raven wings !

ABSENCE.

A FAREWELL ODE ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR
JESUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

WHERE graced with many a classic spoil
Cam rolls his reverend stream along,
I haste to urge the learned toil
That sternly chides my love-lorn song :
Ah me ! too mindful of the days
Illumed by Passion's orient rays,
When Peace, and Cheerfulness, and Health
Enrich me with the best of wealth.

Ah fair delights ! that o'er my soul
On Memory's wing, like shadows fly !
Ah flowers ! which Joy from Eden stole
While Innocence stood smiling by !—
But cease, fond heart ! this bootless moan :
Those hours on rapid pinions flown
Shall yet return, by Absence crowned,
And scatter livelier roses round.
The sun who ne'er remits his fires
On heedless eyes may pour the day :
The moon, that oft from heaven retires,
Endears her renovated ray.
What though she leave the sky unblest
To mourn awhile in murky vest ?
When she relumes her lovely light,
We bless the wanderer of the night.

SONNET.

ON THE SAME.

FAREWELL parental scenes ! a sad farewell !
 To you my grateful heart still fondly clings,
 Though fluttering round on Fancy's burnish'd
 wings

Her tales of future joy Hope loves to tell.
 Adieu, adieu ! ye much lov'd cloisters pale !
 Ah ! would those happy days return again,
 When 'neath your arches, free from every stain,
 I heard of guilt and wonder'd at the tale !
 Dear haunts ! where oft my simple lays I sang,
 Listening meanwhile the echoings of my feet,
 Lingered I quit you, with as great a pang,
 As when ere while, my weeping childhood, torn
 By early sorrow from my native seat,
 Mingled it tears with hers—my widow'd parent
 lorn.

 TO THE MUSE.

Tho' no bold flights to thee belong ;
 And tho' thy lays with conscious fear,
 Shrink from Judgment's eye severe,
 Yet much I thank thee, spirit of my song !
 For, lovely Muse ! thy sweet employ

Exalts my soul, refines my breast,
Gives each pure pleasure keener zest,
And softens sorrow into pensive joy.
From thee I learn'd the wish to bless,
From thee to commune with my heart ;
From thee, dear Muse ! the gayer part,
To laugh with pity at the crowds, that press
Where Fashion flaunts her robes by Folly spun,
Whose hues gay varying wanton in the sun.

1789.

WITH FIELDING'S AMELIA.

VIRTUES and woes alike too great for man
In the soft tale oft claim the useless sigh ;
For vain the attempt to realize the plan,
On folly's wings must imitation fly.
With other aim has Fielding here display'd
Each social duty and each social care ;
With just yet vivid colouring portray'd
What every wife should be, what many are.
And sure the parent of a race so sweet
With double pleasure on the page shall dwell,
Each scene with sympathising breast shall meet,
While Reason still with smiles delights to tell
Maternal hope, that her lov'd progeny
In all but Sorrows shall Amelia's be !

ON RECEIVING AN ACCOUNT

THAT HIS ONLY SISTER'S DEATH WAS INEVITABLE.

THE tear which mourn'd a brother's fate scarce
dry—

Pain after pain, and woe succeeding woe—

Is my heart destined for another blow?

O my sweet sister! and must thou too die?

Ah! how has Disappointment pour'd the tear

O'er infant Hope destroy'd by early frost!

How are ye gone, whom most my soul held
dear!

Scarce had I lov'd you, ere I mourn'd you lost;

Say, is this hollow eye—this heartless pain

Fated to rove thro' life's wide cheerless plain—

Nor father, brother, sister meets its ken—

My woes, my joys unshar'd! Ah! long ere
then

On me thy icy dart, stern Death, be prov'd;—

Better to die, than live and not be lov'd!



ON SEEING A YOUTH

AFFECTIONATELY WELCOMED BY HIS SISTER.

I too a sister had! too cruel Death!

How sad remembrance bids my bosom heave!

Tranquil her soul, as sleeping infant's breath ;
Meek were her manners as a vernal Eve.
Knowledge, that frequent lifts the bloated
mind,
Gave her the treasure of a lowly breast,
And Wit to venom'd Malice oft assign'd,
Dwelt in her bosom in a turtle's nest.
Cease, busy Memory ! cease to urge the dart ;
Nor on my soul her love to me impress !
For oh I mourn in anguish—and my heart
Feels the keen pang, th' unutterable distress,
Yet wherefore grieve I that her sorrows cease,
For life was misery, and the grave is peace.

—◆—
THE SAME.

I too a sister had, an only sister ;—
She lov'd me dearly and I doted on her ;
To her I pour'd forth all my puny sorrows,
(As a sick patient in a nurse's arms)
And of the heart those hidden maladies
That e'en from Friendship's eye will shrink
asham'd,
O ! I have wak'd at midnight and have wept
Because she was not—

PAIN.

ONCE could the morn's first beams, the health-
ful breeze,

All nature charm, and gay was every hour :—
But ah ! not music's self, nor fragrant bower
Can glad the trembling sense of wan disease.
Now that the frequent pangs my fame assail,
Now that my sleepless eyes are sunk and dim,
And seas of pain seem waving through each
limb—

Ah what can all life's gilded scenes avail ?
I view the crowd, whom youth and health
inspire,

Hear the loud laugh, and catch the sportive lay,
Then sigh and think—I too could laugh and play
And gaily sport it on the muse's lyre,
Ere tyrant Pain has chas'd away delight,
Ere the wild pulse throbb'd anguish thro' the
night !

LIFE.

As late I journied o'er the exte sive plain
Where native Otter sports his scanty stream,
Musing in torpid woe a sister's pain,
The glorious prospect wokꝛ me from the
dream ;

LINES ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING. 87

At every step it widen'd to my sight,
Wood, meadow, verdant hill, and dreary
steep.

Following in quick succession of delight,
Till all—at once—did my eye ravish'd sweep!

May this (I cried) my course through life por-
tray!

New scenes of wisdom may each step display,
And knowledge open as my days advance!
Till what time death shall pour the undarken'd
ray,

My eye shall dart thro' infinite expanse,
And thought suspended lie in rapture's blissful
trance.



LINES ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING.

O THOU wild Fancy, check thy wing! No
more

Those thin white flakes, those purple clouds
explore!

Nor there with happy spirits speed thy flight
Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of light,
Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends the
day,

With western peasants hail the morning ray!

Ah! rather bid tho perished pleasures move,
A shadowy train across the soul of Love!
O'er Disappointment's wintry desert fling,
Each flower that wreathed the dewy locks of
Spring,
When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's trim
bower

She leapt, awakened by the pattering shower.
Now sheds the sinking sun a deeper gleam,
Aid, lovely sorceress! aid thy poet's dream!
With faery wand O bid the maid arise,
Chaste joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes;
As erst when from the Muse's calm abode
I came, with learning's meed not unbestowed:
When as she twined a laurel round my brow
And met my kiss, and half returned my vow,
O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled heart,
And every nerve confessed the electric dart.

O dear Deceit! I see the maiden rise,
Chaste joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes!
When first the lark high soaring swells his
throat,
Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the loud note,
I trace her footsteps on the accustomed lawn,
I mark her glancing mid the gleam of dawn.
When the bent flower beneath the night dew
weeps
And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,

Amid the paly radiance soft and sad
 She meets my lonely path in moon-beams clad.
 With her along the streamlet's brink I rove ;
 With her I list the warblings of the grove ;
 And seems in each low wind her voice to float,
 Lone whispering pity in each soothing note !

Spirits of Love ! ye heard her name ! Obey
 The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair.
 Whether on clustering pinions ye are there,
 Where rich snows blossom on the myrtle trees,
 Or with fond languishment around my fair
 Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair ;
 Oh heed the spell, and hither wing your way,
 Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze !

Spirits ! to you the infant Maid was given
 Formed by the wondrous alchemy of heaven !
 No fairer maid does love's wide empire know,
 No fairer maid e'er heaved the bosom's snow.
 A thousand Loves around her forehead fly ;
 A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye ;
 Love lights her smile—in Joy's red nectar dips
 His myrtle flower, and plants it on her lips.
 She speaks ! and hark that passion-warbled
 song—
 Still, Fancy ! still that voice, those notes pro-
 long.

As sweet as when that voice with rapturous
falls
Shall wake the softened echoes of heaven's
halls!

O (have I sighed) were mine the wizard's rod,
Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful god!
A flower-entangled arbour I would seem
To shield my love from noontide's sultry beam:
Or bloom a myrtle, from whose odorous boughs
My love might weave gay garlands for her
brows.

When twilight stole across the fading vale,
To fan my love I'd be the evening gale;
Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest,
And flutter my faint pinions on her breast!
On seraph wing I'd float a dream by night,
To soothe my love with shadows of delight:—
Or soar aloft to be the spangled skies,
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes!

As when the savage, who his drowsy frame
Had basked beneath the sun's unclouded flame,
Awakes amid the troubles of the air,
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's glare—
Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep,
And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep:—
So tossed by storms along life's wildering way,
Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,

When by my native brook I went to rove,
While hope with kisses nursed the infant Love.

Dear native brook ! like Peace, so placidly
Smoothing through fertile fields thy current
meek !

Dear native brook ! where first young Poesy
Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream ;
Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's
cheek,

As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream !

Dear native haunts ! where Virtue still is gay,
Where Friendship's fix'd star sheds a mellowed
ray,

Where Love a crown of thornless roses wears,
Where softened Sorrow smiles within her tears ;

And Memory, with a vestal's chaste employ,
Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of joy ;

No more your sky-larks melting from the sight
Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with de-
light—

No more shall deck your pensive pleasures
sweet

With wreaths of sober hue my evening seat.

Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied scene
Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook be-
tween !

Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled song,
That soars on morning's wing your vales among.

Scenes of my hope ! the aching eye ye leave
Like yon bright hues that paint the clouds of
eve !

Tearful and saddening with the saddened blaze
Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful gaze :
Sees shades on shades with deeper tint impend.
Till chill and damp the moonless night descend.



THE ROSE.

As late each flower that sweetest blows
I plucked, the garden's pride !
Within the petals of a rose
A sleeping Love I spied.

Around his brows a beamy wreath
Of many a lucent hue ;
All purple glowed his cheek, beneath,
Inebriate with dew.

I softly seized the unguarded power,
Nor scared his balmy rest :
And placed him, caged within the flower,
On spotless Sara's breast.

But when unweeting of the guile
Awoke the prisoner sweet,
He struggled to escape awhile
And stamped his faery feet.

Ah! soon the soul-entrancing sight
Subdued the impatient boy!
He gazed! he thrilled with deep delight!
Then clapped his wings for joy.
“And O!” he cried—“of magic kind
What charms this throne endear!
Some other Love let Venus find—
I'll fix my empire here.”

THE KISS.

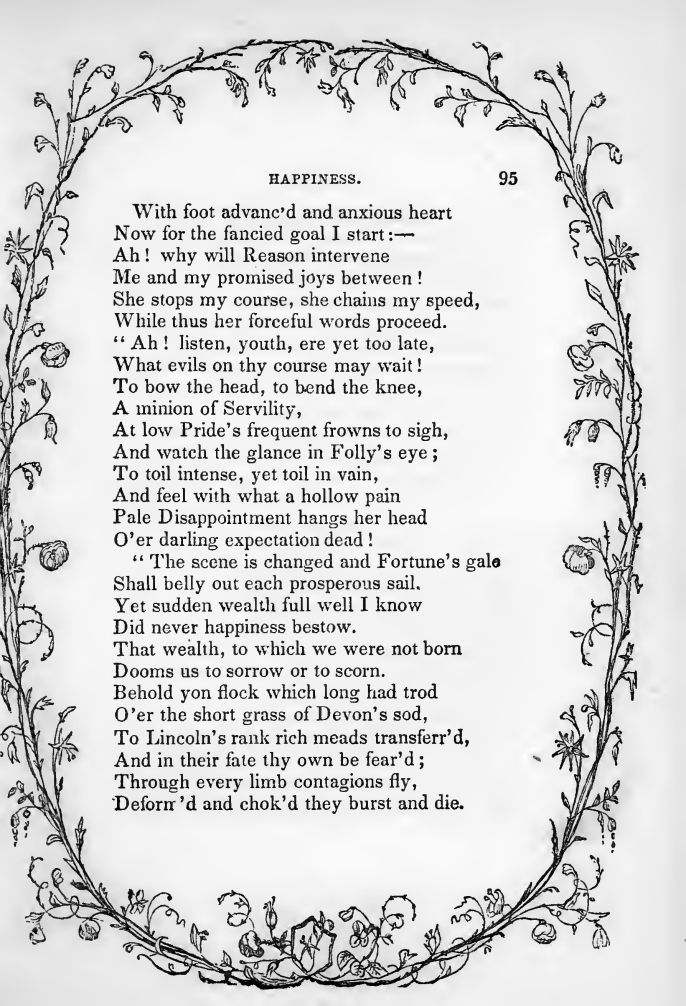
ONE kiss, dear maid! I said and sighed—
Your scorn the little boon denied.
Ah why refuse the blameless bliss?
Can danger lurk within a kiss?

Yon viewless wanderer of the vale,
The spirit of the western gale,
At morning's break, at evening's close
Inhales the sweetness of the rose,
And hovers o'er the uninjured bloom
Sighing back the soft perfume.
Vigour to the Zephyr's wing
Her nectar-breathing kisses fling;
And he the glitter of the dew
Scatters on the rose's hue.
Bashful lo! she bends her head,
And darts a blush of deeper red!

Too well those lovely lips disclose
The triumphs of the opening rose ;
O fair ! O graceful ! bid them prove
As passive to the breath of Love.
In tender accents, faint and low,
Well-pleased I hear the whispered " No !"
The whispered " No "—how little meant !
Sweet falsehood that endears consent !
For on those lovely lips the while
Dawns the soft relenting smile,
And tempts with feigned dissuasion coy
The gentle violence of Joy.

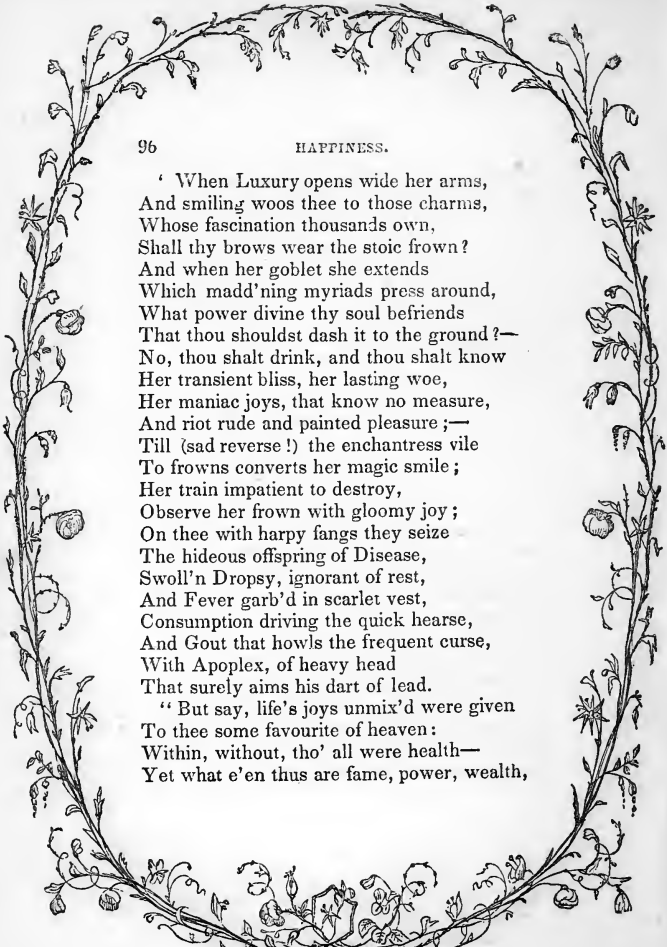
HAPPINESS.

ON wide, or narrow scale shall man
Most happily describe life's plan ?
Say, shall he bloom and wither there,
Where first his infant buds appear :
Or upwards dart with soaring force,
And tempt some more ambitious course ?
Obedient now to Hope's command,
I bid each humble wish expand,
And fair and bright life's prospects seem,
While Hope displays her cheering beam,
And Fancy's vivid colourings stream,
While Emulation stands me nigh
The goddess of the eager eye.



With foot advanc'd and anxious heart
Now for the fancied goal I start:—
Ah! why will Reason intervene
Me and my promised joys between!
She stops my course, she chains my speed,
While thus her forceful words proceed.
“ Ah! listen, youth, ere yet too late,
What evils on thy course may wait!
To bow the head, to bend the knee,
A minion of Servility,
At low Pride's frequent frowns to sigh,
And watch the glance in Folly's eye;
To toil intense, yet toil in vain,
And feel with what a hollow pain
Pale Disappointment hangs her head
O'er darling expectation dead!

“ The scene is changed and Fortune's gale
Shall belly out each prosperous sail.
Yet sudden wealth full well I know
Did never happiness bestow.
That wealth, to which we were not born
Dooms us to sorrow or to scorn.
Behold yon flock which long had trod
O'er the short grass of Devon's sod,
To Lincoln's rank rich meads transferr'd,
And in their fate thy own be fear'd;
Through every limb contagions fly,
Deform'd and chok'd they burst and die.



' When Luxury opens wide her arms,
And smiling woos thee to those charms,
Whose fascination thousands own,
Shall thy brows wear the stoic frown?
And when her goblet she extends
Which madd'ning myriads press around,
What power divine thy soul befriends
That thou shouldst dash it to the ground?—
No, thou shalt drink, and thou shalt know
Her transient bliss, her lasting woe,
Her maniac joys, that know no measure,
And riot rude and painted pleasure;—
Till (sad reverse!) the enchantress vile
To frowns converts her magic smile;
Her train impatient to destroy,
Observe her frown with gloomy joy;
On thee with harpy fangs they seize
The hideous offspring of Disease,
Swoll'n Dropsy, ignorant of rest,
And Fever garb'd in scarlet vest,
Consumption driving the quick hearse,
And Gout that howls the frequent curse,
With Apoplex, of heavy head
That surely aims his dart of lead.

“ But say, life's joys unmix'd were given
To thee some favourite of heaven:
Within, without, tho' all were health—
Yet what e'en thus are fame, power, wealth,

But sounds that variously express,
What's thine already—happiness !
'Tis thine the converse deep to hold
With all the famous sons of old ;
And thine the happy waking dream
While Hope pursues some favourite theme,
As oft when night o'er heaven is spread,
Round this maternal seat you tread,
Where far from splendour, far from riot,
In silence wrapt sleeps careless quiet.

'Tis thine with fancy oft to talk,
And thine the peaceful evening walk :
And what to thee the sweetest are—
The setting sun, the evening star—
The tints which live along the sky,
And moon that meets thy raptur'd eye,
Where oft the tear shall grateful start,
Dear silent pleasures of the heart !
Ah ! being blest, for heaven shall lend
To share thy simple joys a friend !
Ah ! doubly blest, if Love supply
His influence to complete thy joy,
If chance some lovely maid thou find
To read thy visage in thy mind.

“ One blessing more demands thy care
Once more to heaven address the praye
For humble independence pray
The guardian genius of thy way ;

Whom (sages say) in days of yore
Meek competence to wisdom bore,
So shall thy little vessel glide
With a fair breeze adown the tide,
And Hope, if e'er thou 'ginst to sorrow
Remind thee of some fair to-morrow,
Till death shall close thy tranquil eye
While faith proclaims " thou shalt not die !"

DOMESTIC PEACE.

TELL me, on what holy ground
May Domestic peace be found—
Halcyon daughter of the skies !
Far on fearful wings she flies,
From the pomp of sceptered state
From the rebel's noisy hate.
In a cottaged vale she dwells
Listening to the sabbath bells !
Still around her steps are seen
Spotless Honour's meeker mien,
Love, the sire of pleasing fears,
Sorrow smiling through her tears,
And conscious of the past employ
Memory, bosom-spring of joy.

THE SIGH.

WHEN Youth his faery reign began
Ere sorrow had proclaimed me man ;
While Peace the present hour beguiled,
And all the lovely prospect smiled ;
Then Mary ! 'mid my lightsome glee
I heav'd the painless sigh for thee.

And when, along the waves of woe,
My harassed heart was doomed to know
The frantic burst of outrage keen,
And the slow pang that gnaws unseen :
Then shipwrecked on life's stormy sea
I heaved an anguished sigh for thee !

But soon Reflection's power imprest
A stiller sadness on my breast ;
And sickly hope with waning eye
Was well content to droop and die :
I yielded to the stern decree,
Yet heaved a languid sigh for thee !

And though in distant climes to roam,
A wanderer from my native home,
I fain would soothe the sense of care,
And lull to sleep the joys that were,
Thy image may not banished be—
Still, Mary ! still I sigh for thee.

June, 1794.

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

ERE sin could blight or sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care ;
The opening bud to heaven conveyed,
And bade it blossom there.



LINES

TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE.

ONCE more, sweet stream ! with slow foot wan-
dering near,
I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
Escaped the flashing of the noontide hours,
With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers
(Ere from thy zephyr-haunted brink I turn)
My languid hand shall wreath thy mossy urn.
For not through pathless grove with murmur
rude
Thou soothest the sad wood-nymph, Solitude ;
Nor thine unseen in cavern depths to well,
The hermit-fountain of some dripping cell !
Pride of the vale ! thy useful streams supply
The scattered cots and peaceful hamlet nigh.
The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks
With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks.

Released from school, their little hearts at rest,
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
The rustic here at eve with pensive look
Whistling lorn ditties leans upon his crook,
Or starting pauses with hope-mingled dread
To list the much-loved maid's accustomed
tread ;

She vainly mindful of her dame's command,
Loiters, the long-filled pitcher in her hand.

Unboastful stream ! thy fount with pebbled falls
The faded form of past delight recalls,
What time the morning sun of Hope arose,
And all was joy ; save when another's woes
A transient gloom upon my soul imprest,
Like passing clouds impictured on thy breast.
Life's current then ran sparkling to the noon,
Or silvery stole beneath the pensive moon :
Ah ! now it works rude brakes and thorns
among,
Or o'er the rough rock bursts and foams along !

LINES ON A FRIEND

WHO DIED OF A FRENZY FEVER INDUCED BY
CALUMNIOUS REPORTS.

EDMUND ! thy grave with aching eye I scan,
And inly groan for heaven's poor outcast—man !

'Tis tempest all or gloom in early youth
If gifted with the Ithuriel lance of Truth
We force to start amid her feigned caress
Vice, siren-hag ! in native ugliness ;
A brother's fate will haply rouse a tear,
And on we go in heaviness and fear !
But if our fond hearts call to Pleasure's bower
Some pigmy Folly in a careless hour,
The faithless guest shall stamp the enchanted
ground,

And mingled forms of misery rise around :
Heart-fretting Fear, with pallid look aghast,
That courts the future woe to hide the past ;
Remorse, the poisoned arrow in his side,
And loud lewd Mirth, to Anguish close allied :
Till Frenzy, fierce-eyed child of moping pain,
Darts her hot lightning flash athwart the brain.
Rest, injur'd shade ! Shall Slander squatting
near

Spit her cold venom in a dead man's ear ?
'Twas thine to feel the sympathetic glow
In Merit's joy, and Poverty's meek woe ;
Thine all, that cheer the moment as it flies,
The zoneless Cares, and smiling Courtesies.
Nursed in thy heart the firmer Virtues grew,
And in thy heart they withered ! Such chill dew
Wan Indolence on each young blossom shed !
And Vanity her filmy net-work spread,

With eye that rolled around in asking gaze,
And tongue that trafficked in the trade of praise.
Thy follies such! the hard world marked them
well!

Were they more wise, the proud who never fell?
Rest, injured shade! the poor man's grateful
prayer

On heaven-ward wing thy wounded soul shall
bear.

As oft at twilight gloom thy grave I pass,
And sit me down upon its recent grass,
With introverted eye I contemplate
Similitude of soul, perhaps of—fate;
To me hath heaven with bounteous hand assigned
Energic reason and a shaping mind,
The daring ken of truth, the patriot's part,
And pity's sigh, that breathes the gentle heart.
Sloth-jaundiced all! and from my graspless hand
Drop Friendship's precious pearls, like hour-
glass sand.

I weep, yet stoop not! the faint anguish flows,
A dreamy pang in morning's feverous doze.

Is this piled earth our being's passless mound?
Tell me, cold grave! is death with poppies
crown'd?

Tired sentinel! mid fitful starts I nod,
And fain would sleep, though pillowed on a
clod!

SONNET I.

“Content, as random Fancies might inspire,
If his weak harp at times or lonely lyre
He struck with desultory hand, and drew
Some softened tones to Nature not untrue.”

BOWLES.

My heart has thank'd thee, Bowles ! for those
soft strains

Whose sadness soothes me, like the murmuring
Of wild-bees in the sunny showers of spring !

For hence not callous to the mourner's pains
Through youth's gay prime and thornless paths

I went :

And when the mightier throes of mind began,
And drove me forth, a thought-bewildered man,
Their mild and manliest melancholy lent

A mingled charm, such as the pang consigned
To slumber, though the big tear it renewed ;

Bidding a strange mysterious pleasure brood
Over the wavy and tumultuous mind,

As the great Spirit erst with plastic sweep
Moved on the darkness of the unformed deep.

SONNET II.

As late I lay in slumber's shadowy vale,
With wetted cheek and in a mourner's guise,
I saw the sainted form of Freedom rise:
She spake! not sadder moans the autumnal
gale—

“Great Son of Genius! sweet to me thy name,
Ere in an evil hour with altered voice
Thou bad'st Oppression's hireling crew rejoice
Blasting with wizard spell my laureled fame.
Yet never Burke! thou drank'st Corruption's
bowl!

Thee stormy Pity and the cherished lure
Of Pomp, and proud precipitance of soul
Wildered with meteor fires. Ah spirit pure!
That error's mist had left thy purged eye:
So might I clasp thee with a mother's joy!”

SONNET III.

THOUGH roused by that dark vizir, Riot rude
Have driven our Priestly o'er the ocean swell;
Though Superstition and her wolfish brood
Bay his mild radiance, impotent and fell;
Calm in his halls of brightness he shall dwell!
For lo! Religion at his strong behest

Starts from mild anger from the Papal spell,
And flings to earth her tinsel-glittering vest,
Her mitred state and cumbrous pomp unholy ;
And Justice wakes to bid the oppressor wail
Insulting aye the wrongs of Patient Folly ;
And from her dark retreat by Wisdom won
Meek Nature slowly lifts her matron-veil
To smile with fondness on her gazing son !

SONNET IV.

WHEN British Freedom for a happier land
Spread her broad wings, that fluttered with
affright,
Erskine ! thy voice she heard, and paused her
flight
Sublime of hope ! For dreadless thou didst stand
(Thy censer glowing with the hallowed flame)
A hireless priest before the insulted shrine
And at her altar pour the stream divine
Of unmatched eloquence. Therefore thy name
Her sons shall venerate, and cheer thy breast
With blessings heavenward breathed. And
when the doom
Of nature bids thee die, beyond the tomb
Thy light shall shine : as sunk beneath the west
Though the great summer sun eludes our gaze,
Still burns wide heaven with his distended blaze.

SONNET V.

It was some Spirit, Sheridan! that breathed
O'er thy young mind such wildly various power!
My soul hath marked thee in her shaping hour,
Thy temples with Hymettian flowerets wreathed:
And sweet thy voice, as when o'er Laura's bier
Sad music trembled through Vauclusa's glade;
Sweet, as at dawn the love-lorn serenade
That wafts soft dreams to Slumber's listening
ear.

Now patriot rage and indignation high
Swell the full tones! And now thine eye-beams
dance.

Meanings of scorn and wit's quaint revelry!
Writes inly from the bosom-probing glance
The apostate by the brainless rout adored,
As erst that elder fiend beneath great Michael's
sword.



SONNET VI.

O WHAT a loud and fearful shriek was there,
As though a thousand souls one death groan
poured!

Ah me! they saw beneath a hireling's sword
Their Kosciusko fall! Through the swart air

(As pauses the tired Cossac's barbarous yell
Of triumph) on the chill and midnight gale
Rises with frantic burst or sadder swell
The dirge of murdered Hope! while Freedom
pale
Bends in such anguish o'er her destined bier,
As if from eldest time some spirit meek
Had gathered in a mystic urn each tear
That ever on a patriot's furrowed cheek
Fit channel found, and she had drained the bowl
In the mere wilfulness, and sick despair of soul!

SONNET VII.

As when far off the warbled strains are heard
That soar on Morning's wing the vales among,
Within his cage the imprisoned matin bird
Swells the full chorus with a generous song:
He bathes no pinion in the dewy light,
No father's joy, no lover's bliss he shares,
Yet still the rising radiance cheers his sight;
His fellows' freedom soothes the captive's cares!
Thou Fayette! who didst wake with starting
voice
Life's better sun from that long wintry night,
Thus in thy country's triumphs shalt rejoice,
And mock with raptures high the dungeon's
might:

For lo! the morning struggles into day,
And slavery's spectres shriek and vanish from
the ray!

SONNET VIII.

THOU gentle look, that didst my soul beguile,
Why hast thou left me? Still in some fond
dream
Revisit my sad heart, auspicious smile!
As falls on closing flowers the lunar beam:
What time, in sickly mood, at parting day
I lay me down and think of happier years;
Of joys, that glimmered in hope's twilight ray,
Then left me darkling in a vale of tears.
O pleasant days of hope—for ever gone!—
Could I recall you!—But that thought is vain.
Availeth not Persuasion's sweetest tone
To lure the fleet-winged travellers back again:
Yet fair, though faint, their images shall gleam
Like the bright rainbow on a willowy stream.

SONNET IX.

PALE roamer through the night! thou poor
forlorn!
Remorse that man on his death-bed possess,

Who in the credulous hour of tenderness
Betrayed, then cast thee forth to want and
scorn!

The world is pitiless: the chaste one's prid
Mimic of virtue scowls on thy distress:
Thy loves and they, that envied thee, deride:
And Vice alone will shelter wretchedness!
O! I could weep to think, that there should be
Cold-bosomed lewd ones, who endure to place
Foul offerings on the shrine of Misery,
And force from Famine the caress of Love;
May He shed healing on the sore disgrace,
He, the great Comforter that rules above!

SONNET X.

SWEET Mercy! how my very heart has bled
To see thee, poor old man! and thy gray hairs
Hoar with the snowy blast: while no one cares
To clothe thy shrivelled limbs and palsied head.
My father! throw away this tattered vest
That mocks thy shivering! take my garment—
use
A young man's arm! I'll melt these frozen
dews
That hang from thy white beard and numb thy
breast.

My Sara too shall tend thee, like a child :
And thou shalt talk, in our fireside's recess,
Of purple pride, that scowls on wretchedness.
He said not so, the Galilean mild,
Who met the lazars turned from rich men's
doors,
And called them friends, and healed their
noisome sores !

SONNET XI.

How bleedest, my poor heart ! and thy distress
Reasoning I ponder with a scornful smile,
And probe thy sore wound sternly, though the
while
Swoln be mine eye and dim with heaviness.
Why didst thou listen to Hope's whisper bland ?
Or, listening, why forget the healing tale,
When Jealousy with feverous fancies pale
Jarred thy fine fibres with a maniac's hand ?
Faint was that Hope, and rayless !—Yet 'twas
fair,
And soothed with many a dream the hour of
rest :
Thou shouldst have loved it most, when most
opprest,
And nursed it with an agony of care,

Even as a mother her sweet infant heir
That wan and sickly droops upon her breast !

SONNET XII.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE "ROBBERS."

SCHILLER! that hour I would have wished to
die,

If through the shuddering midnight I had sent
From the dark dungeon of the tower time-rent
That fearful voice, a famished father's cry—
Lest in some after moment aught more mean
Might stamp me mortal! A triumphant shout
Black Horror screamed, and all her goblin rout
Diminished shrunk from the more withering
scene!

Ah! bard tremendous in sublimity!
Could I behold thee in thy loftier mood
Wandering at eve with finely frenzied eye
Beneath some vast old tempest-swinging wood!
Awhile with mute awe gazing I would brood:
Then weep aloud in a wild ecstasy!

RELIGIOUS MUSINGS;

A DESULTORY POEM, WRITTEN ON THE CHRISTMAS
EVE OF 1794.

THIS is the time, when most divine to hear,
The voice of adoration rouses me,
As with a cherub's trump: and high upborne,
Yea, mingling with the choir, I seem to view
The vision of the heavenly multitude,
Who hymned the song of peace o'er Bethle-
hem's fields!

Yet thou more bright than all the angel blaze,
That harbinger'd thy birth, Thou, Man of
Woes!

Despised Galilean! For the great
Invisible (by symbols only seen)
With a peculiar and surpassing light
Shines from the visage of the oppressed good
man,

When heedless of himself the scourged Saint
Mourns for the oppressor. Fair the vernal
mead,

Fair the high grove, the sea, the sun, the stars;
True impress each of their creating Sire!

Yet nor high grove, nor many-coloured mead,
Nor the green Ocean with his thousand isles,
Nor the starred azure, nor the sovran sun,
E'er with such majesty of portraiture

Imaged the supreme beauty uncreate,
As thou, meek Saviour! at the fearful hour
When thy insulted anguish winged the prayer
Harped by archangels, when they sing of mercy!
Which when the Almighty heard from forth his
throne

Diviner light filled heaven with ecstasy!
Heaven's hymnings paused: and hell her yawn-
ing mouth
Closed a brief moment.

Lovely was the death
Of him whose life was Love! Holy with power
He on the thought-benighted skeptic beamed
Manifest Godhead, melting into day
What floating mists of dark idolatry
Broke and misshaped the omnipresent Sire:
And first by fear uncharmed the drowsed soul,
Till of its nobler nature it 'gan feel
Dim recollections; and thence soared to hope
Strong to believe whate'er of mystic good
The Eternal dooms for his immortal sons.
From hope and firmer faith to perfect love
Attracted and absorbed: and centred there
God only to behold, and know, and feel,
Till by exclusive consciousness of God
All self-annihilated it shall make
God its identity: God all in all!
We and our Father one!

And blessed are they,
Who in this fleshly world, the elect of heaven,
Their strong eye darting through the deeds of
men,

Adore with steadfast unpresuming gaze
Him Nature's essence, mind, and energy!
And gazing, trembling, patiently ascend
Treading beneath their feet all visible things
As steps, that upward to their Father's throne
Lead gradual—else nor glorified nor loved.
They nor contempt embosom nor revenge;
For they dare know of what may seem deform
The Supreme Fair sole operant: in whose sight
All things are pure, his strong controlling love
Alike from all educing perfect good.
Their's too celestial courage, inly armed—
Dwarfing earth's giant brood, what time they
muse

On their great Father, great beyond compare!
And marching onwards view high o'er their
heads

His waving banners of Omnipotence.

Who the Creator love, created night
Dread not: within their tents no terrors walk.
For they are holy things before the Lord
Aye unprofaned, though earth should league
with hell;

God's altar grasping with an eager hand

Fear, the wild visaged, pale, eye-starting wretch,
Sure-refuged hears his hot pursuing fiends
Yell at vain distance. Soon refreshed from
heaven

He calms the throb and tempest of his heart.
His countenance settles; a soft solemn bliss
Swims in his eye—his swimming eye upraised :
And Faith's whole armour glitters on his limbs !
And thus transfigured with a dreadless awe,
A solemn hush of souls, meek he beholds
All things of terrible seeming : yea, unmoved
Views e'en the immitigable ministers
That shower down vengeance on these latter
days.

For kindling with intenser Deity
From the celestial mercy-seat they come,
And at the renovating wells of love
Have filled their vials with salutary wrath,
To sickly nature more medicinal
Than what soft balm the weeping good man
pours
Into the lone despoiled traveller's wounds !

Thus from the elect, regenerate through faith,
Pass the dark passions and what thirsty cares
Drink up the spirit, and the dim regards
Self-centre. Lo they vanish ! or acquire
New names, new features—by supernal grace
Enrobed with light, and naturalized in heaven.

As when a shepherd on a vernal morn
Through some thick fog creeps timorous with
slow foot,

Darkling he fixes on the immediate road
His downward eye : all else of fairest kind
Hid or deformed. But lo ! the bursting sun
Touched by the enchantment of that sudden
beam

Straight the black vapour melteth, and in globes
Of dewy glitter gems each plant and tree ;
On every leaf, on every blade it hangs !
Dance glad the new-born intermingling rays,
And wide around the landscape streams with
glory !

There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
Omnific. His most holy name is Love.
Truth of subliming import ! with the which
Who feeds and saturates his constant soul,
He from his small particular orbit flies
With blest outstarting ! From himself he flies,
Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze
Views all creation ; and he loves it all,
And blesses it, and calls it very good !
This is indeed to dwell with the most High !
Cherubs and rapture-trembling seraphim
Can press no nearer to the Almighty's throne.
But that we roam unconscious, or with hearts
Unfeeling of our universal Sire,

And that in his vast family no Cam
Injures uninjured (in her best-aimed blow
Victorious murder a blind suicide)
Haply for this some younger angel now
Looks down on human nature: and, behold!
A sea of blood bestrewed with wrecks, where
mad
Embattling interests on each other rush
With unhelmed rage!

'Tis the sublime of man,
Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves
Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole!
This fraternizes man, this constitutes
Our charities and bearings. But 'tis God
Diffused through all, that doth make all one
whole;
This the worst superstition, him except
Aught to desire, Supreme Reality!
The plenitude and permanence of bliss!
O fiends of superstition! not that oft
The erring priest hath stained with brother's
blood
Your grisly idols, not for this 'ny wrath
Thunder against you from the Holy One!
But o'er some plane that steameth to the sun,
Peopled with death; or where more hideous
trade

Loud-laughing packs his bales of human anguish ;

I will raise up a mourning, O ye fiends !
 And curse your spells that film the eye of faith,
 Hiding the present God ; whose presence lost,
 The moral world's cohesion, we become
 An anarchy of spirits ! Toy-bewitched,
 Made blind by lusts, disherited of soul,
 No common centre man, no common sire
 Knoweth ! A sordid solitary thing,
 Mid countless brethren with a lonely heart
 Through courts and cities the smooth savage
 roams

Feeling himself, his own low self the whole ;
 When he by sacred sympathy might make
 The whole one self ! self, that no-alien knows !
 Self, far diffused as fancy's wing can travel !
 Self, spreading still ! Oblivious of its own,
 Yet all of all possessing ! This is faith !
 This the Messiah's destined victory !
 But first offences needs must come ! Even now*

* January 21st, 1791, in the debate on the address to his Majesty, on the speech from the Throne, the Earl of Guildford moved an amendment to the following effect : " That the House hoped his Majesty would seize the earliest opportunity to conclude a peace with France," &c. This motion was opposed by the Duke of Portland, who " considered the war to be merely grounded on one principle—the preser-

(Black hell laughs horrible—to hear the scoff!)
 Thee to defend, meek Galilean! Thee
 And thy mild laws of love unutterable.
 Mistrust and enmity have burst the bands
 Of social peace; and listening treachery lurks
 With pious fraud to snare a brother's life;
 And childless widows o'er the groaning land
 Wail numberless; and orphans weep for bread
 Thee to defend, dear Saviour of mankind!
 Thee, Lamb of God! Thee, blameless Prince
 of peace!

From all sides rush the thirsty brood of War—
 Austria, and that foul woman of the north,
 The lustful murderess of her wedded lord!
 And he, connatural mind! whom (in their songs
 So bards of elder time had haply feigned)
 Some fury fondled in her hate to man,
 Bidding her serpent hair in mazy surge
 Lick his young face, and at his mouth imbreathe

vation of the Christian Religion." May 30th, 1791,
 the Duke of Bedford moved a number of resolutions,
 with a view to the establishment of a peace with
 France. He was opposed, (among others) by Lord
 Abington in these remarkable words: "The best
 road to Peace, my Lords, is War! and War carried
 on in the same manner in which we are taught to
 worship our Creator, namely, with all our souls, and
 with all our minds, and with all our hearts, and with
 all our strength."

Horrible sympathy! And leagued with these
Each pretty German princeling, nursed in gore
Soul-hardened barterers of human blood!
Death's prime slave-merchants! Scorpion
whips of Fate!

Nor least in savagery of holy zeal,
Apt for the yoke, the race degenerate,
Whom Britain erst had blushed to call her sons :
Thee to defend the Moloch priest prefers
The prayer of hate, and bellows to the herd
That deity, accomplice deity
In the fierce jealousy of wakened wrath
Will go forth with our armies and our fleets
To scatter the red ruin on their foes !
O blasphemy ! to mingle fiendish deeds
With blessedness !

Lord of unsleeping love *
From everlasting Thou! We shall not die.
These, even these, in mercy didst thou form,
Teachers of good through evil, by brief wrong.
Making Truth lovely, and her future might
Magnetic o'er the fixed untrembling heart.
In the primeval age a dateless while
The vacant shepherd wandered with his flock,

* Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God,
mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou
hast ordained them for judgment, &c. *Habakkuk.*

Pitching his tent where'er the green grass waved.
But soon imagination conjured up
A host of new desires: with busy aim,
Each for himself, earth's eager children toiled.
So property began, twy-streaming fount,
Whence vice and virtue flow, honey and gall.
Hence the soft couch, and many-coloured robe,
The timbrel, and arch'd dome and costly feast,
With all the inventive arts, that nursed the soul
To forms of beauty, and by sensual wants
Unsensualised the mind, which in the means
Learnt to forget the grossness of the end,
Best pleased with his own activity.
And hence disease that withers manhood's arm.
The daggered Envy, spirit-quenching Want,
Warriors, and lords, and priests—all the sore ills
That vex and desolate our mortal life.
Wide-wasting ills! yet each the immediate
source
Of mightier good. Their keen necessities
To ceaseless action goading human thought
Have made earth's reasoning animal her lord:
And the pale featured sage's trembling hand
Strong as a host of armed deities,
Such as the blind Ionian fabled erst.

From avarice thus, from luxury and war
Sprang heavenly science; and from science
freedom.

O'er wakened realms philosophers and bards
Spread in concentric circles : they whose souls,
Conscious of their high dignities from God,
Brook not wealth's rivalry ! and they who long
Enamoured with the charms of order hate
The unseemly disproportion : and whoe'er
Turn with mild sorrow from the victor's car
And the low puppetry of thrones, to muse
On that blest triumph, when the patriot sage
Called the red lightnings from the o'er rushing
cloud

And dashed the beauteous terrors on the earth
Smiling majestic. Such a phalanx ne'er
Measured firm paces to the calming sound
Of Spartan flute ! These on the fated day,
When, stung to rage by pity, eloquent men
Have roused with pealing voice the unnumbered
tribes

That toil and groan and bleed, hungry and
blind,—

These hushed awhile with patient eye serene
Shall watch the mad careering of the storm ;
Then o'er the wild and wavy chaos rush
And tame the outrageous mass, with plastic
might

Moulding confusion to such perfect forms,
As erst were wont,—bright visions of the day !—
To float before them, when, the summer noon

Beneath some arch'd romantic rock reclined
They felt the sea breeze lift their youthful
locks ;

Or in the month of blossoms, at mild eve,
Wandering with desultory feet inhaled
The wasted perfumes, and the flocks and woods
And many-tinted streams and setting sun
With all his gorgeous company of clouds
Ecstatic gazed ! then homeward as they strayed
Cast the sad eye to earth, and inly mused
Why there was misery in the world so fair.
Ah ! far removed from all that glads the sense,
From all that softens or ennobles Man,
The wretched many ! Bent beneath their
loads

They gape at pageant power, nor recognise
Their cot's transmitted plunder ! From the tree
Of knowledge, ere the vernal sap had risen
Rudely disbranched ! Blest society !
Fittest depicted by some sun-scorched waste,
Where oft majestic through the tainted noon
The Simoom sails, before whose purple pomp
Who falls not prostrate dies ! And where by
night,

Fast by each precious fountain on green herbs
The lion couches ; or hyæna dips
Deep in the lucid stream his bloody jaws ;
Or serpent plants his vast moon-glittering bulk.

Caught in whose monstrous twine Behemoth*
yells,
His bones loud-crashing !

O ye numberless,
Whom foul oppression's ruffian gluttony
Drives from life's plenteous feast ! O thou poor
wretch

Who nursed in darkness and made wild by want,
Roamest for prey, yea thy unnatural hand
Dost lift to deeds of blood ! O pale-eyed form,
The victim of seduction, doomed to know
Polluted nights and days of blasphemy ;
Who in loathed orgies with lewd wassailers
Must gaily laugh, while thy remembered home
Gnaws like a viper at thy secret heart !
O aged women ! ye who weekly catch
The morsel tossed by law-forced charity,
And die so slowly, that none call it murder !
O loathly suppliants ! ye, that unreceived
Totter heart-broken from the closing gates
Of the full lazarus-house : or, gazing, stand
Sick with despair ! O ye to glory's field
Forced or ensnared, who, as ye gasp in death,

* Behemoth, in Hebrew, signifies wild beasts in general. Some believe it is the elephant, some the hippopotamus ; some affirm it is the wild bull. Poetically, it designates any large quadruped.

Bleed with new wounds beneath the vulture's
beak !

O thou poor widow, who in dreams dost view
Thy husband's mangled corse, and from short
doze

Start'st with a shriek ; or in thy half-thatched cot,
Waked by the wintry night-storm, wet and cold,
Cow'r'st o'er thy screaming baby ! Rest awhile,
Children of wretchedness ! More groans must
rise,

More blood must stream, or ere your wrongs be
full.

Yet is the day of retribution nigh :
The Lamb of God hath opened the fifth seal :
And upward rush on swiftest wing of fire
The innumerable multitude of wrongs
By man on man inflicted ! Rest awhile,
Children of wretchedness ! The hour is nigh ;
And lo ! the great, the rich, the mighty men,
The kings and the chief captains of the world,
With all that fixed on high like stars of heaven
Shot baleful influence, shall be cast to earth,
Vile and down-trodden, as the untimely fruit
Shook from the fig-tree by a sudden storm.
Even now the storm begins : * each gentle name,
Faith and meek Piety, with fearful joy

* Alluding to the French Revolution.

Tremble far-off—for lo! the giant Frenzy
Uprooting empires with his whirlwind arm
Mocketh high heaven; burst hideous from the
cell

Where the old hag, unconquerable, huge,
Creation's eyeless drudge, black ruin, sits
Nursing the impatient earthquake.

O return!

Pure Faith! meek Piety! The abhorred form
Whose scarlet robe was stiff with earthly pomp,
Who drank iniquity in cups of gold,
Whose names were many and all blasphemous,
Hath met the horrible judgment! Whence that
cry?

The mighty army of foul spirits shrieked
Disherited of earth! For she hath fallen
On whose black front was written Mystery;
She that reeled heavily, whose wine was blood:
She that worked whoredom with the demon
power,

And from the dark embrace all evil things
Brought forth and nurtured: mitred Atheism!
And patient Folly who on bended knee
Gives back the steel that stabbed him; and pale
fear

Haunted by ghastlier shapings than surround
Moon-blasted Madness when he yells at mid-
night!

Return pure Faith! return meek Piety!
The kingdoms of the world are yours: each
heart

Self-governed, the vast family of Love
Raised from the common earth by common toil
Enjoy the equal produce. Such delights
As float to earth, permitted visitants!
When in some hour of solemn jubilee
The massy gates of Paradise are thrown
Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
And odours snatched from beds of amaranth,
and they, that from the crystal river of life
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales!
The favoured good man in his lonely walk
Perceives them, and his silent spirit drinks
Strange bliss which he shall recognise in heaven.
And such delights, such strange beatitudes
Seize on my young anticipating heart
When that blest future rushes on my view!
For in his own and in his Father's might
The Saviour comes! While as the Thousand
Years

Lead up their mystic dance, the Desert shouts!
Old Ocean claps his hands! The mighty Dead
Rise to new life, who'er from earliest time
With conscious zeal had urged Love's wondrous
plan,

Coadjutors of God. To Milton's trump
 The high groves of the renovated earth
 Unbosom their glad echoes: inly hushed,
 Adoring Newton his serener eye
 Raises to heaven: and he of mortal kind
 Wisest, he* first who marked the ideal tribes
 Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain.
 Lo! Priestley there, patriot, and saint, and sage,
 Him, full of years, from his loved native land
 Statesmen blood stained and priests idolatrous
 By dark lies maddening the blind multitude
 Drove with vain hate. Calm, pitying he retired,
 And mused expectant on these promised years.

O years! the blest pre-eminence of saints!
 Ye sweep athwart my gaze, so heavenly bright,
 The wings that veil the adoring seraph's eye,
 What time they bend before the Jasper Thronet
 Reflect no lovelier hues! Yet ye depart,
 And all beyond is darkness! Heights most
 strange
 When Fancy falls, fluttering her idle wing.

* David Hartley.

† Rev. chap. iv. v. 2 and 3:—And immediately I
 was in the spirit: and behold, a Throne was set in
 Heaven, and one sat on the Throne. And he that
 sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine
 stone, &c.

For who of woman born may paint the hour,
When seized in his mid course, the sun shall
wane

Making noon ghastly! Who of woman born
May image in the workings of his thought,
How the black-visaged, red-eyed fiend out
stretched*

Beneath the unsteady feet of Nature groans,
In feverous slumbers—destined then to wake,
When fiery whirlwinds thunder his dread name
And Angels shout, Destruction! How his arm
The last great spirit lifting high in air,
Shall swear by Him, the ever-living One,
Time is no more!

Believe thou, O my soul,
Life is a vision shadowy of Truth;
And vice, and anguish, and the wormy grave,
Shapes of a dream! The veiling clouds retire,
And lo! the throne of the redeeming God
Forth flashing unimaginable day
Wraps in one blaze, earth, heaven, and deepest
hell.

Contemplant spirits! ye that hover o'er
With untired gaze the immeasurable fount
Ebullient with creative Deity!

* The final destruction impersonated.

And ye of plastic power, that interfused
Roll through the grosser and material mass
In organizing surge ! Holies of God !
(And what if Monads of the infinite mind)
I haply journeying my immortal course
Shall sometime join your mystic choir. Till then
I discipline my young and novice thought
In ministeries of heart-stirring song,
And aye on Meditation's heaven-ward wing
Soaring aloft I breathe the empyreal air
Of love, omnific, omnipresent love,
Whose day-spring rises glorious in my soul
As the great sun, when he his influence
Sheds on the frost-bound waters—The glad
stream
Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows.

ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.*

I.

SPiRiT who sweepst the wild harp of time !
It is most hard, with an untroubled ear
Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear !
Yet, mine eye fixed on heaven's unchanging
clime,

* This Ode was composed on the 24th, 25th, and 26th days of December, 1796 : and was first published on the last day of that year.

Long had I listened, free from mortal fear,
 With inward stillness, and a bowed mind :
 When lo ! its folds far waving on the wind,
 I saw the train of the departing year !
 Starting from my silent sadness
 Then with no unholy madness,
 Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,
 I raised the impetuous song, and solemnized his
 flight.

II.

Hither, from the recent tomb,
 From the prison's direr gloom,
 From distemper's midnight anguish ;
 And thence, where poverty doth waste and
 languish !

Or where, his two bright torches blending,
 Love illumines manhood's maze ;
 Or where o'er cradled infants bending
 Hope has fixed her wishful gaze ;
 Hither, in perplexed dance,
 Ye Woes ! ye young-eyed Joys ! advance !

By Time's wild harp, and by the hand
 Whose indefatigable sweep
 Raises its fateful strings from sleep,
 I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band !
 From every private bower,

And each domestic hearth,
Haste for one solemn hour ;
And with a loud and yet a louder voice,
O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
Weep and rejoice !
Still echoes the dread name that o'er the earth
Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of Hell :
And now advance in saintly jubilee
Justice and Truth ! They too have heard thy
spell,
They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty !

III.

I marked Ambition in his war-array !
I heard the mailed monarch's troublous cry—
“ Ah ! wherefore does the northern conqueress
stay !
Groans not her chariot on its onward way ? ”
Fly, mailed monarch, fly !
Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,
No more on murder's lurid face
The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye !
Manes of the unnumbered slain !
Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain !
Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
When human ruin choaked the streams,
Fell in conquest's glutton hour,
Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !

Spirits of the uncoffined slain,
 Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
 Oft, at night, in misty train,
 Rush around her narrow dwelling !
 The exterminating fiend is fled—
 (Foul her life, and dark her doom)—
 Mighty armies of the dead
 Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb !
 Then with prophetic song relate,
 Each some tyrant-murderer's fate !

IV.

Departing Year ! 'twas on no earthly shore
 My soul beheld thy vision ! Where alone,
 Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
 Aye Memory sits : thy robe inscribed with gore,
 With many an unimaginable groan
 Thou storied'st thy sad hours ! Silence en-
 sued,
 Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,
 Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with
 glories shone.

Then, his eye wild arduours glancing,
 From the choired gods advancing,
 The spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,
 And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

v.

Throughout the blissful throng,
Hushed were harp and song :
Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads
seven,
(The mystic words of heaven)
Permissive signal make :
The fervent spirit bowed, then spread his wings
and spake !
“ Thou in stormy blackness throning
Love and uncreated light,
By the Earth's unsolaced groaning,
Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !
By peace with proffered insult scared,
Masked hate and envying scorn !
By years of havoc yet unborn !
And hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared !
But chief by Afric's wrongs,
Strange, horrible, and foul !
By what deep guilt belongs
To the deaf synod, ' full of gifts and lies !'
By wealth's insensate laugh ! by torture's howl !
avenger, rise !
For ever shall the thankless island scowl,
Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ?
Speak ! from thy storm-black heaven, O speak
aloud !

And on the darkling foe
Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain
cloud !

O dart the flash ! O rise and deal the blow !
The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries !
Hark ! how wide Nature joins her groans
below !
Rise, God of Nature ! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled ;
Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
And ever, when the dream of night
Renews the phantom to my sight,
Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs ;
My ears throb hot ; my eye-balls start ;
My brain with horrid tumult swims ;
Wild is the tempest of my heart ;
And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of death !
No stranger agony confounds
The soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds,
Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead !
(The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,
And the night-wind clamours hoarse !
See ! the starting wretch's head
Lies pillowed on a brother's corse !)

VII.

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
 O Albion ! O my mother Isle !
 Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
 Glitter green with sunny showers ;
 Thy grassy uplands gentle swells
 Echo to the bleat of flocks ;
 (Those grassy hills, those glittering dells
 Proudly ramparted with rocks)
 And Ocean mid his uproar wild
 Speaks safety to his island-child ;
 Hence for many a fearless age
 Has social Quiet loved thy shore ;
 Nor ever proud invader's rage
 Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields
 with gore.

VIII.

Abandoned of heaven ! mad avarice thy guide,
 At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
 Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou
 hast stood,
 And joined the wild yelling of famine and blood !
 The nations curse thee ! They with eager wonder-
 ing
 Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture scream !

Strange-eyed Destruction! who with many a
 dream
 Of central fires through nether seas upthundering
 Soothes her fierce solitude; yet as she lies
 By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
 If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,
 O Albion! thy predestined ruins rise,
 The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
 Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed
 sleep.

IX.

Away, my soul, away!
 In vain, in vain the birds of warning sing—
 And hark! I hear the fanished brood of prey
 Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind!
 Away, my soul, away!
 I unpartaking of the evil thing,
 With daily prayer and daily toil
 Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
 Have wailed my country with a loud lament.
 Now I recentre my immortal mind
 In the deep sabbath of meek self-content;
 Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim
 God's image, sister of the seraphim.

FRANCE.—AN ODE.

I.

YE clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye ocean-waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye woods! that listen to the night-birds singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope re-
clined,
Save when your own imperious branches
swinging,

Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering fields I
wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable
sound!

O ye loud waves! and O ye forests high!
And O ye clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising sun! thou blue rejoicing sky!
Yea, every thing that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth
and sea,
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be
free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared!
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
And when to whelm the disenchanting nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The monarchs marched in evil day,
And Britain joined the dire array;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves
Had swol'n the patriot emotion
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and
groves;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delayed and vain retreat!
For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

' And what," I said, " though Blasphemy's
loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove !
Though all the fierce and drunken passions
wove

A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's
dream !

Ye storms, that round the dawning east as-
sembled,

The sun was rising, though ye hid his light !"

And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and
trembled,

The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm
and bright ;

When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory ;

When, insupportably advancing,

Her arm made mockery of the warrior's
tramp ;

While timid looks of fury glancing,

Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal
stamp,

Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore ;

' Then I reproached my fears that would not
flee ;

" And soon," I said, " shall Wisdom teach her
lore

In the low huts of them that toil and groan !
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till Love and Joy look round, and call the earth
their own."

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom ! O forgive those dreams
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy cavern sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained
streams !

Heroes, that for your peaceful country
perished,
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I
cherished

One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes :
To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
Where Peace her jealous home had built ;
A patriot race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ;
And with inexpiable spirit.

To taint the bloodless freedom of the moun-
taineer—

O France, that mockest heaven, adulterous,
blind,

And patriot only in pernicious toils,
Are these thy boasts, champion of human kind ?

To mix with kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous
prey ;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray ?

v.

The sensual and the dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad
game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor
ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of
the waves !
And there I felt thee !—on that sea-cliff's verge,
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze
above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge !

Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.
February, 1797.

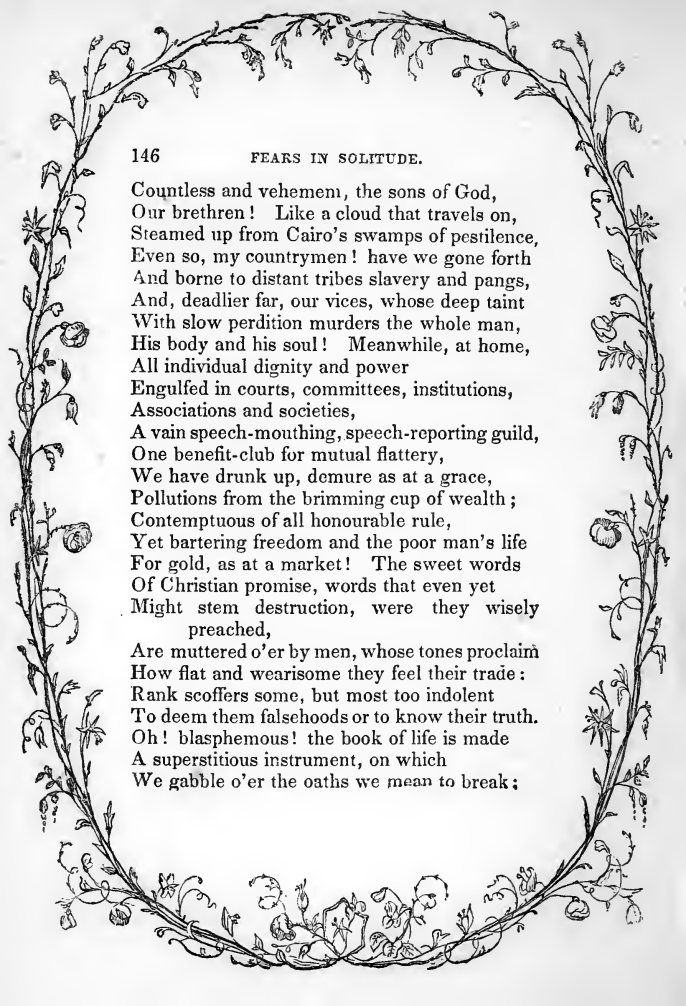
FEARS IN SOLITUDE.

WRITTEN IN APRIL, 1798, DURING THE ALARM
OF AN INVASION.

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
No singing sky-lark ever poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely; but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal corn-field, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at
eve,
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
Oh! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he
'The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly, as had made
His early manhood more securely wise!
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,

While from the singing-lark (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best,)
And from the sun, and from the breezy air,
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame ;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of nature !
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing-lark ;
That singest like an angel in the clouds !

My God ! it is a melancholy thing
For such a man, who would full fain preserve
His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
For all his human brethren—O my God !
It weighs upon the heart, that he must think
What uproar and what strife may now be stirring
This way or that way o'er these silent hills—
Invasion, and the thunder and the shout,
And all the crash of onset ; fear and rage,
And undetermined conflict—even now,
Even now, perchance, and in his native isle :
Carnage and groans beneath this blessed sun !
We have offended, Oh ! my countrymen !
We have offended very grievously,
And been most tyrannous. From east to west
A groan of accusation pierces heaven !
The wretched plead against us ; multitudes



Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
Our brethren! Like a cloud that travels on,
Steamed up from Cairo's swamps of pestilence,
Even so, my countrymen! have we gone forth
And borne to distant tribes slavery and pangs,
And, deadlier far, our vices, whose deep taint
With slow perdition murders the whole man,
His body and his soul! Meanwhile, at home,
All individual dignity and power
Engulfed in courts, committees, institutions,
Associations and societies,
A vain speech-mouthing, speech-reporting guild,
One benefit-club for mutual flattery,
We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,
Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth;
Contemptuous of all honourable rule,
Yet bartering freedom and the poor man's life
For gold, as at a market! The sweet words
Of Christian promise, words that even yet
Might stem destruction, were they wisely
preached,
Are muttered o'er by men, whose tones proclaim
How flat and wearisome they feel their trade:
Rank scoffers some, but most too indolent
To deem them falsehoods or to know their truth.
Oh! blasphemous! the book of life is made
A superstitious instrument, on which
We gabble o'er the oaths we mean to break;

For all must swear—all and in every place,
 College and wharf, council and justice-court ;
 All, all must swear, the briber and the bribed,
 Merchant and lawyer, senator and priest,
 The rich, the poor, the old man and the young ;
 All, make up one scheme of perjury,
 That faith doth reel ; the very name of God
 Sounds like a juggler's charm ; and, bold with
 joy,

Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
 (Portentous sight !) the owlet Atheism,
 Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon,
 Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them
 close,

And hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven,
 Cries out, " Where is it ? "

Thankless too for peace,
 (Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous
 seas)

Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
 To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war !
 Alas ! for ages ignorant of all

Its ghastly workings, (famine or blue plague,
 Battle, or siege, or flight through wintry snows .
 We, this whole people, have been clamorous
 For war and bloodshed ; animating sports,
 The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
 Spectators and not combatants ! No guess

Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
No speculation or contingency,
However dim and vague, too vague and dim
To yield a justifying cause; and forth,
(Stuffed out with big preamble, holy names,
And adjurations of the God in Heaven,)
We send our mandates for the certain death
Of thousands and ten thousands! Boys and
girls,

And women, that would groan to see a child
Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
The best amusement for our morning-meal!
The poor wretch, who has learnt his only
prayers

From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
To ask a blessing from his heavenly Father,
Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
And technical in victories and defeats,
And all our dainty terms for fratricide;
Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our
tongues

Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
We join no feeling and attach no form!
As if the soldier died without a wound;
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
Passed off to heaven, translated and not killed.

As though he had no wife to pine for him,
No God to judge him! Therefore, evil days
Are coming on us, O my countrymen!
And what if all-avenging Providence,
Strong and retributive, should make us know
The meaning of our words, force us to feel
The desolation and the agony
Of our fierce doings!

Spare us yet awhile,
Father and God! O! spare us yet awhile!
Oh! let not English women drag their flight
Fainting beneath the burthen of their babes,
Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
Laughed at the breast! Sons, brothers, hus-
bands, all
Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
Which grew up with you round the same fire-
side,
And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves
pure!
Stand forth! be men! repel an impious foe,
Impious and false, a light yet cruel race,
Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
With deeds of murder; and still promising
Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free,
Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
Of faith and quiet hope, and all that sooths

And all that lifts the spirit ! Stand we forth ;
Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
And let them toss as idly on its waves
As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain-
blast
Swept from our shores ! And oh ! may we re-
turn
Not with a drunken triumph, but with fear,
Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung
So fierce a foe to frenzy !

I have told,
O Britons ! O my brethren ! I have told
Most bitter truth, but without bitterness.
Nor deem my zeal or factious or mistimed ;
For never can true courage dwell with them,
Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not
look
At their own vices. We have been too long
Dupes of a deep delusion ! Some, belike,
Groaning with restless enmity, expect
All change from change of constituted power ;
As if a government had been a robe,
On which our vice and wretchedness were
tagged
Like fancy-points and fringes, with the robe
Pulled off at pleasure. Fondly these attach
A radical causation to a few
Poor drudges of chastising Providence,

Who borrow all their hues and qualities
From our own folly and rank wickedness,
Which gave them birth and nursed them.

Others, meanwhile,
Dote with a mad idolatry ; and all
Who will not fall before their images,
And yield them worship, they are enemies
Even of their country !

Such have I been deemed—
But, O dear Britain ! O my mother isle !
Needs must thou prove a name most dear and
holy

To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
A husband, and a father ! who revere
All bonds of natural love, and find them all
Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
O native Britain ! O my mother isle !
How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear
and holy

'To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
'Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely and all honourable things,
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being ?
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul

Unborrowed from my country. O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me!

May my fears,
My filial fears, be vain! and may the vaunts
And menace of the vengeful enemy
Pass like the gust, that roared and died away
In the distant tree: which heard, and only heard
In this low dell, bowed not the delicate grass.

But now the gentle dew-fall sends abroad
The fruit-like perfume of the golden furze:
The light has left the summit of the hill,
Though still a sunny gleam lies beautiful,
Aslant the ivied beacon. Now farewell,
Farewell, awhile, O soft and silent spot!
On the green sheep-track, up the heathy hill,
Homeward I wind my way; and lo! recalled
From bodings that have well nigh wearied me,
I find myself upon the brow, and pause
Startled! And after lonely sojourning
In such a quiet and surrounded nook,
This burst of prospect, here the shadowy main,
Dim tinted, there the mighty majesty
Of that huge amphitheatre of rich
And elmy fields, seems like society—

Conversing with the mind, and giving it
A livelier impulse and a dance of thought !
And now, beloved Stowey ! I behold
Thy church-tower, and, methinks, the four
huge elms
Clustering, which mark the mansion of my
friend ;
And close behind them, hidden from my view,
Is my own lowly cottage, where my babe
And my babe's mother dwell in peace ! With
light
And quickened footsteps thitherward I tend,
Remembering thee, O green and silent del !
And grateful, that by nature's quietness
And solitary musings, all my heart
Is softened, and made worthy to indulge
Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human
kind.

Nether Stowey, April 28th, 1798.

LOVE.

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve ;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve !

She leaned against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight ;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a fitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The lady of the land.

I told her how he pined : and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a fitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable knight !

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The lady of the land ;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain ;—

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay ;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of sou. and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve ;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stept aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride ;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride.

LEWTI,

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT.

At midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The moon was high, the moonlight gleam

And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half sheltered from my view

By pendent boughs of tressy yew—
So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair.

Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,

Onward to the moon it passed;
Still brighter and more bright it grew,
With floating colours not a few,

Till it reached the moon at last:
Then the cloud was wholly bright,
With a rich and amber light!

And so with many a hope I seek,
And with such joy I find my Lewti;

And even so my pale wan cheek
Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty !
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind,
If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
Away it goes ; away so soon ?
Alas ! it has no power to stay :
Its hues are dim, its hues are gray—
Away it passes from the moon !
How mournfully it seems to fly
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky—
And now 'tis whiter than before !
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When, Lewti ! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image ! leave my mind—
And yet, thou did'st not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high ;
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :
Perhaps the breezes that can fly
Now below and now above,
Have snatched aloft the lawnly shroud
Of lady fair—that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perished
From fruitless love too fondly cherished.

Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever:
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread
And startle from their reedy bed.
O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
'To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies,
When silent night has closed her eyes:
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head:
Voice of the night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream,
And dreamt that I had died for care:

All pale and wasted I would seem,
 Yet fair withal, as spirits are !
 I'd die indeed, if I might see
 Her bosom heave, and heave for me !
 Soothe, gentle image ! soothe my mind !
 To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

1795.

 THE PICTURE.

OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

'THROUGH weeds and thorns, and matted under-
 wood
 force my way ; now climb, and now descend
 O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
 Crushing the purple whorts ; while oft unseen,
 Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves,
 The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil
 I know not, ask not whither ! a new joy,
 Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
 And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
 Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
 Playmate, or guide ! The master-passion
 quelled,
 I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
 The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
 Forth from his tangle wild of bush and brake

Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse;
Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,
And of this busy human heart weary,
Worships the spirit of unconscious life
In tree or wild flower.—Gentle lunatic!
If so he might not wholly cease to be,
He would far rather not be that, he is;
But would be something, that he knows not of,
In winds or waters, or among the rocks!

But hence, fond wretch! breathe not contagion
here!

No myrtle-walks are these: these are no groves
Where Love dare loiter! If in sullen mood
He should stray hither, the low stumps shall
gore

His dainty feet, the briar and the thorn
Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded
bird

Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades!
And you, ye earth-winds! you that make at
morn

The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs!
You, O ye wingless Airs! that creep between
The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,

Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless
 damp,
Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
Chase, chase him, all ye fays, and elfin gnomes!
With prickles sharper than his darts bemock
His little godship, making him perforce
Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's
 back.

This is my hour of triumph! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine
Clothes as with net-work: here will I couch
 my limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man
As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly brook
That murmurs with a dead, yet tinkling sound;
Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. The breeze, that visits me,
Was never Love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow.
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek;
Ne'er played the wanton—never half disclosed

The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song,
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert stream! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
The face, the form divine, the downcast look
Contemplative! Behold! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror! Who erewhile
Had from her countenance turned, or looked by
stealth,

(For fear is true love's cruel nurse,) he now
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom-world on which he gazed,
But not unheeded gazed: for see, ah! see,
The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-hert and fox-glove bells:

And suddenly, as one that toys with time,
Scatters them on the pool! Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine
eyes!

The stream will soon renew its smoothness,
soon

The visions will return! And lo! he stays:
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror; and behold
Each wild-flower on the marge inverted there,
And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned
On its bare branch? He turns, and she is gone!
Homeward she steals through many a woodland
maze

Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth!
Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou
Behold'st her shadow still abiding there,
The Naiad of the mirror!

Not to thee,
O wild and desert stream! belong this tale:
Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs

Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy
bed,
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well :
Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild
stream !

This be my chosen haunt—emancipate
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead,
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
Lo ! stealing through the canopy of firs,
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
How soon to re-unite ! And see ! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found : and see
Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye !
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds,
The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
Dimness o'erswum with lustre ! Such the hour
Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds ;
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall !
I pass forth into light—I find myself
Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful
Of forest-trees, the lady of the woods,)
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
That overbrows the cataract. How bursts

The landscape on my sight! Two crescent
hills

Fold in behind each other, and so make
A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,
With brook and bridge, and gray stone cottages,
Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
The whortle-berries are bedewed with spray,
Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.

How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass
Swings in its winnow: all the air is calm.

The smoke from cottage chimneys, tinged with
light,

Rises in columns; from the house alone,
Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is
this?

That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,
And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
His dear head pillowed on a sleeping dog—
One arm between its fore legs, and the hand
Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.

A curious picture with a master's haste
Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin,
Peeled from the birchen bark ' Divinest maid!
Yon bark her canvass, and those purple berries
Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried
On the fine skin! She has been newly here;

And lo! yon patch of heath has been he
couch—

The pressure still remains! O blessed couch:
For this mayest thou flower early, and the sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel!

Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids,
More beautiful than whom Alcæus wooed,
The Lesbian woman of immortal song!
O child of genius! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart,
Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice
wood

Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straight
way

On to her father's house. She is alone!
The night draws on—such ways are hard to
hit—

And fit it is I should restore this sketch,
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn
To keep the relic? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste
The picture in my hand which she hast left;
She cannot blame me that I followed her:
And I may be her guide the long wood through

TO AN UNFORTUNATE WOMAN.

WHOM THE AUTHOR HAD KNOWN IN THE DAYS
OF HER INNOCENCE.

MYRTLE-LEAF that ill besped,
Pinest in the gladsome ray,
Soiled beneath the common tread,
Far from thy protecting spray !

When the partridge o'er the sheaf
Whirred along the yellow vale
Sad I saw thee, heedless leaf !
Love the dalliance of the gale.

Lightly didst thou, foolish thing !
Heave and flutter to his sighs,
While the flatterer, on his wing,
Wooded and whispered thee to rise.

Gaily from thy mother-stalk
Wert thou danced and wafted high
Soon on this unsheltered walk
Flung to fade, to rot and die.

TO A YOUNG LADY.

ON HER RECOVERY FROM A FEVER.

WHY need I say, Louisa dear !
How glad I am to see you here,
A lovely convalescent ;
Risen from the bed of pain and fear,
And feverish heat incessant.

The sunny showers, the dappled sky,
The little birds that warble high,
Their vernal loves commencing,
Will better welcome you than I
With their sweet influencing.

Believe me, while in bed you lay,
Your danger taught us all to pray :
You made us grow devouter !
Each eye looked up and seemed to say,
How can we do without her ?

Besides, what vexed us worse, we knew-
They have no need of such as you
In the place where you were going :
This world has angels very few,
And heaven is overflowing !

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY
NATURAL.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

If I had but two little wings,
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things,
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly :
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I?
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids :
So I love to wake ere break of day :
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

Do you ask what the bird's say? The sparrow,
the dove,
The linnet and thrush say. "I love and I love!"

In the winter they're silent—the wind is strong ;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud
song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny
warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back to
gether.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love
The green fields below him, the blue sky above.
That he sings, and he sings ; and forever sing
he—
“ I love my love, and my love loves me ! ”

A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
God grant me grace my prayers to say :
O God ! preserve my mother dear
In strength and health for many a year ;
And, O ! preserve my father too,
And may I pay him reverence due ;
And may I my best thoughts employ
To be my parents' hope and joy ;
And, O ! preserve my brothers both
From evil doings and from sloth,
And may we always love each other,
Our friends, our father, and our mother :

And still, O Lord, to me impart
An innocent and grateful heart,
That after my last sleep I may
Awake to thy eternal day !

Amen.

THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

oft, oft methinks, the while with thee
I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
And dedicated name, I hear
A promise and a mystery,
A pledge of more than passing life,
Yea in that very name of wife !

A pulse of love, that ne'er can sleep !
A feeling that upbraids the heart
With happiness beyond desert,
That gladness half requests to weep !
Nor bless I not the keener sense
And unalarming turbulence

Of transient joys, that ask no sting
From jealous fears, or coy denying ;
But born beneath Love's brooding wing,
And into tenderness soon dying,
Wheel out the giddy moment, then
Resign the soul to love again —

A more precipitated vein
Of notes, that eddy in the flow
Of smoothest song, they come, they go,
And leave their sweeter understrain
Its own sweet self—a love of thee
That seems, yet cannot greater be!



RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

I.

How warm this woodland wild recess
Love surely hath been breathing here ;
And this sweet bed of heath, my dear !
Swells up, then sinks with faint caress,
As if to have you yet more near.

II.

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
On seaward Quantock's heathy hills,
Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
Float here and there, like things astray,
And high o'er head the sky-lark shrills.

III.

No voice as yet had made the air
Be music with your name ; yet why

That asking look ? that yearning sigh ?
That sense of promise every where ?
Beloved ! flew your spirit by ?

IV.

As when a mother doth explore
The rose-mark on her long lost child,
I met, I loved you, maiden mild !
As whom I long had loved before—
So deeply, had I been beguiled.

V.

You stood before me like a thought,
A dream remembered in a dream.
But when those meek eyes first did seem
To tell me, Love within you wrought—
O Greta, dear domestic stream !

VI.

Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep
Has not Love's whisper evermore
Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar ?
Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
Dear under-song in clamor's hour.

ON REVISITING THE SEA-SHORE,
AFTER LONG ABSENCE, UNDER STRONG MEDICAL
RECOMMENDATION NOT TO BATHE.

God be with thee, gladsome ocean !
How gladly greet I thee once more !
Ships and waves, and ceaseless motion,
And men rejoicing on thy shore.

Dissuading spake the mild physician,
" Those briny waves for thee are death !"
But my soul fulfilled her mission,
And lo ! I breathe untroubled breath !

Fashion's pining sons and daughters,
That seek the crowd they seem to fly,
Trembling they approach thy waters ;
And what cares Nature, if they die ?

Me a thousand hopes and pleasures,
A thousand recollections, bland,
Thoughts sublime, and stately measures.
Revisit on thy echoing strand :

Dreams, (the soul herself forsaking.)
Tearful raptures, boyish mirth ;
Silent adorations, making
A blessed shadow of this earth !

O ye hopes, that stir within me,
 Health comes with you from above !
 God is with me, God is in me !
 I cannot die, if life be love.



HYMN.

BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Besides the rivers Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides ; and within a few paces of the Glaciers, the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers, with its "flowers of loveliest blue."

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
 In his steep course ? So long he seems to pause
 On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc !
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
 Rave ceaselessly ; but thou, most awful form !
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
 How silently ! Around thee and above
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
 An ebon mass : methinks thou piercest it,
 As with a wedge ! But when I look again,
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
 Thy habitation from eternity !

O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Did'st vanish from my thought: entranced in
prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my
thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart,
awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!

Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth ?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light ?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams ?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever ?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your
joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?
And who commanded (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest ?

Ye ice-falls ! ye that from the mountain's
brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge !
Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts !
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
Beneath the keen full moon ? Who bade the
sun
Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living
flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?—
God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,

Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome
voice!

Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like
sounds!

And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar mount! with the sky-pointing
peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure
serene
Into the depths of clouds, that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with
tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the earth!

Thou kingly spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the sweet sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM

ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY, 1796.

SWEET Flower! that peeping from thy russet
stem

Unfoldest timidly, (for in strange sort
This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chatter-
ing month

Hath borrowed Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon
thee

With blue voluptuous eye) alas, poor flower!
These are but flatteries of the faithless year.
Perchance, escaped its unknown polar cave,
E'en now the keen North-East is on its way.
Flower that must perish! shall I liken thee
To some sweet girl of too, too rapid growth
Nipped by consumption mid untimely charms?
Or to Bristowa's bard,* the wondrous boy!

* Chatterton.

An amaranth, which Earth scarce seemed to own,
 Till disappointment came, and pelting wrong
 Beat it to Earth? or with indignant grief
 Shall I compare thee to poor Poland's hope,
 Bright flower of Hope killed in the opening bud?
 Farewell, sweet blossom! better fate be thine
 And mock my boding! Dim similitudes
 Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one hour
 From anxious self, Life's cruel taskmaster!
 And the warm wooings of this sunny day
 Tremble along my frame, and harmonize
 The attempered organ, that even saddest
 thoughts

Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh tunes
 Played deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

COMPOSED AT CLEVEDON, SOMERSETSHIRE.

My pensive Sara! thy soft cheek reclined
 Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
 To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
 With white-flowered jasmine, and the broad-
 leaved myrtle,
 (Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love!)
 And watch the clouds, that late were rich with
 light

Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
Shine opposite! How exquisite the scents
Snatched from yon bean-field! and the world
so hushed!

The stilly murmur of the distant sea
Tells us of silence.

And that simplest lute,
Placed lengthwise in the clasping casement, hark
How by the desultory breeze caressed,
Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now its
strings

Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from fairy-land,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed
wing!

O the one life within us and abroad,
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance every
where—

Methinks, it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so filled ;
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
Is Music slumbering on her instrument.

And thus, my love ! as on the midway slope
Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
Whilst through my half-closed eye-lids I behold
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the
 rain,
And tranquil muse upon tranquillity ;
Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
And many idle fitting phantasies,
Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
As wild and various as the random gales
That swell and flutter on this subject lute !

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each, and God of all ?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved woman ! nor such thoughts
Dim and unhallowed dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ !
Well hast thou said and holily dispraised



TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

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These shapings of the unregenerate mind ;
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of him,
The Incomprehensible ! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels ;
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, heart-honoured
maid !

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RECITATION
OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL
MIND.

FRIEND of the wise ! and teacher of the good !
Into my heart have I received that lay
More than historic, that prophetic lay
Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)
Of the foundations and the building up
Of a human spirit thou hast dared to tell
What may be told, to the understanding mind
Revealable ; and what within the mind
By vita' breathings secret as the soul

Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart
Thoughts all too deep for words!—

Theme hard as high!
Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears,
(The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth)
Of tides obedient to external force,
And currents self-determined, as might seem,
Or by some inner power; of moments awful,
Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
When power streamed from thee, and thy soul
received

The light reflected, as a light bestowed—
Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth,
Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
Native or outland, lakes and famous hills!
Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars
Were rising; or by secret mountain-streams,
The guides and the companions of thy way!

Of more than fancy, of the social sense
Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
Where France in all her towns lay vibrating
Like some becalmed bark beneath the burst
Of heaven's immediate thunder, when no cloud
Is visible, or shadow on the main.
F'or thou wert there, thine own brows garlanded,
Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,

Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
When from the general heart of human kind
Hope sprang forth like a full-born deity !
—Of that dear hope afflicted and struck down,
So summoned homeward, thenceforth calm and
sure
From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute
self,
With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
Far on—herself a glory to behold,
The angel of the vision ! Then (last strain)
Of duty, chosen laws controlling choice,
Action and joy !—An Orphic song indeed,
A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
'To their own music chanted !

O great bard !
Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
Of ever-enduring men. The truly great
Have all one age, and from one visible space
Shed influence ! They, both in power and act,
Are permanent, and time is not with them,
Save as it worketh for them, they in it.
Nor less a sacred roll, than those of old,
And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
Among the archives of mankind, thy work
Makes audible a linked lay of truth,
Of truth profound a sweet continuous lay,

Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes !
Ah ! as I listened with a heart forlorn,
The pulses of my being beat anew :
And even as life returns upon the drowned,
Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains—
Keen pangs of love, awakening as a babe
Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart ;
And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of
 hope ;
And hope that scarce would know itself from
 fear ;
Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
And genius given, and knowledge won in vain ;
And all which I had culled in wood-walks wild,
And all which patient toil had reared, and all,
Commune with thee had opened out—bu
 flowers
Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier,
In the same coffin, for the self-same grave !

That way no more ! and ill beseems it me,
Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
Singing of glory, and futurity,
To wander back on such unhealthful road,
Plucking the poisons of self-harm ! And ill
Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
Strewed before thy advancing !

Nor do thou,
Sage bard! impair the memory of that hour
Of my communion with thy nobler mind
By pity or grief, already felt too long!
Nor let my words import more blame than
needs.

The tumult rose and ceased: for peace is nigh
Where wisdom's voice has found a listening
heart.

Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours
Already on the wing.

Eve followed eve,
Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of
home

Is sweetest! moments for their own sake hailed
And more desired, more precious for thy song,
In silence listening, like a devout child,
My soul lay passive, by thy various strain
Driven as in surges now beneath the stars,
With momentary stars of my own birth,
Fair constellated foam,* still darting off

* "A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it: and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small con-

Into the darkness ; now a tranquil sea,
Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.

And when—O friend ! my comforter and guide !
Strong in thyself, and powerful to give
strength !—

Thy long sustained song finally closed,
And thy deep voice had ceased—yet thou thyself
Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
That happy vision of beloved faces—
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
I sate, my being blended in one thought
(Thought was it ? or aspiration ? or resolve ?)
Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound—
And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

A CONVERSATION POEM.—APRIL, 1798.

No cloud, no relic of the sunken day
Distinguishes the west, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge !
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,

stellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like
a Tartar troop over a wilderness."—*The Friend*
p. 220.

But hear no murmuring : it flows silently,
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night ! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark ! the nightingale begins its song,
" Most musical, most melancholy " bird ! *
A melancholy bird ! Oh ! idle thought !
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man, whose heart
 was pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch ! filled all things with
 himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrow,) he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit ;
Poet who hath been building up the rhyme

* "*Most musical, most melancholy.*" This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description. It is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a dramatic propriety. The author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity, to a line in Milton.

When he had better far have stretched his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful ! so his fame
Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing ! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like Nature ! But 'twill not be so ;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My friend, and thou, our sister ! we have
learnt
A different lore : we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance ! 'Tis the merry nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music !

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the
paths.

But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than
all—

Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might
almost

Forget it was not day! On moon-lit bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclosed,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright
and full,

Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the
shade

Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home

Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways; she knows all
their notes,

That gentle maid! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! and she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy jay that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O warbler! till to-morrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short fare-
well!

We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain
again!

Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,

And bid us listen ! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's playmate. He knows
well

The evening-star ; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's
dream,—)

I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped
tears

Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam ! Well !—
It is a father's tale : But if that heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy.—Once more, farewell,
Sweet nightingale ! Once more, my friends !
farewell.



ODE TO TRANQUILLITY.

TRANQUILLITY ! thou better name
Than all the family of Fame !
Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
To low intrigue, or factious rage ;

For oh! dear child of thoughtful Truth,
To thee I gave my early youth,
And left the bark, and blest the steadfast shore,
Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me with its
 roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, Power divine,
Thy spirit rests! Satiety
And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle hope
And dire remembrance interlope,
To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind :
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks
 behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
At morning through the accustomed mead ;
And in the sultry summer's heat
Will build me up a mossy seat ;
And when the gust of autumn crowds,
And breaks the busy midnight clouds,
Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart
 attune,
Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding
 moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
To thee I dedicate the whole !

And while within myself I trace
 The greatness of some future race,
 Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
 The present works of present man—
 A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
 Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile!

 SONNET.

COMPOSED ON A JOURNEY HOMEWARD; THE AUTHOR HAVING RECEIVED INTELLIGENCE OF THE BIRTH OF A SON, SEPT. 20, 1796.

OFt o'er my brain does that strange fancy roll
 Which makes the present (while the flash
 doth last)
 Seem a mere semblance of some unknown
 past,
 Mixed with such feelings, as perplex the soul
 Self-questioned in her sleep; and some have
 said
 We lived, ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.
 O my sweet baby! when I reach my door,
 If heavy looks should tell me thou art dead,
 (As sometimes, through excess of hope, I fear)
 I think that I should struggle to believe
 Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere

Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve ;
 Did'st scream, then spring to meet heaven's
 quick reprieve,
 While we wept idly o'er thy little bier !



SONNET.

TO A FRIEND WHO ASKED, HOW I FELT WHEN
 THE NURSE FIRST PRESENTED MY INFANT TO
 ME.

CHARLES ! my slow heart was only sad, when
 first

I scanned that face of feeble infancy :
 For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
 All I had been, and all my child might be !
 But when I saw it on its mother's arm,
 And hanging at her bosom (she the while
 Bent o'er its features with a tearful smile)
 Then I was thrilled and melted, and most warm
 Impressed a father's kiss : and all beguiled
 'Of dark remembrance and presageful fear,
 I seemed to see an angel-form appear—
 'Twas even thine, beloved woman mild !
 So for the mother's sake the child was dear,
 And dearer was the mother for the child.

THE VIRGIN'S CRADLE-HYMN.

COPIED FROM A PRINT OF THE VIRGIN, IN A
ROMAN CATHOLIC VILLAGE IN GERMANY.

DORMI, Jesu! mater ridet
Quæ tam dulcem somnum videt,
Dormi, Jesu! blandule!
Si non dormis, mater plorat,
Inter fila cantans orat,
Blande, veni, somnule.

ENGLISH.

Sleep, sweet babe! my cares beguiling:
Mother sits beside thee smiling;
Sleep, my darling, tenderly!
If thou sleep not, mother mourneth,
Singing as her wheel she turneth:
Come, soft slumber, balmily!

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

Its balmy lips the infant blest
Relaxing from its mother's breast,
How sweet it heaves the happy sigh
Of innocent satiety!

And such my infant's latest sigh!
O tell, rude stone! the passer-by,
That here the pretty babe doth lie,
Death sang to sleep with lullaby.

MELANCHOLY.

A FRAGMENT.

STRETCH'D on a mouldered abbey's broadest
wall,

Where running ivies propped the ruins steep-
Her folded arms wrapping her tattered pall,
Had Melancholy mus'd herself to sleep.

The fern was press'd beneath her hair,
The dark green adder's tongue was there;
And still as past the flagging sea-gale weak,
The long lank leaf bowed fluttering o'er her
cheek.

That pallid cheek was flushed : her eager look
Beamed eloquent in slumber ! Inly wrought,
Imperfect sounds her moving lips forsook,
And her bent forehead worked with troubled
thought.
Strange was the dream——



TELL'S BIRTH-PLACE.

IMITATED FROM STOLBERG.

I.

MARK this holy chapel well !
The birth-place, this, of William Tell.
Here, where stands God's altar dread,
Stood his parents' marriage-bed.

II.

Here, first, an infant to her breast,
Him his loving mother prest ;
And kissèd the babe, and blessed the day,
And prayed as mothers use to pray.

III.

“ Vouchsafe him health, O God ! and give
The child thy servant still to live ! ”

But God had destined to do more
Through him, than through an armed power

IV.

God gave him reverence of laws,
Yet stirring blood in Freedom's cause—
A spirit to his rocks akin,
The eye of the hawk, and the fire therein!

V.

To Nature and to Holy Writ
Alone did God the boy commit:
Where flashed and roared the torrent, oft
His soul found wings, and soared aloft!

VI.

The straining oar and chamois chase
Had formed his limbs to strength and grace:
On wave and wind the boy would toss,
Was great, nor knew how great he was!

VII.

He knew not that his chosen hand,
Made strong by God, his native land
Would rescue from the shameful yoke
Of slavery—the which he broke!

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

I.

THE shepherds went their hasty way,
And found the lowly stable-shed
Where the Virgin-Mother lay :
And now they checked their eager tread
For to the Babe, that at her bosom clung,
A mother's song the Virgin-Mother sung.

II.

They told her how a glorious light,
Streaming from a heavenly throng,
Around them shone, suspending night !
While sweeter than a mother's song,
Blest Angels heralded the Saviour's birth,
Glory to God on high ! and Peace on earth.

III.

She listened to the tale divine,
And closer still the Babe she prest ;
And while she cried, the Babe is mine !
The milk rashed faster to her breast :
Joy rose within her, like a summer's morn ;
Peace, Peace on Earth ! the Prince of Peace is
born.

IV.

Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate !
That strife should vanish, battle cease,
O why should this thy soul elate ?
Sweet music's loudest note, the poet's story,—
Did'st thou ne'er love to hear of fame and
glory ?

V.

And is not War a youthful king,
A stately hero clad in mail ?
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring ;
Him earth's majestic monarchs hail
Their friend, their playmate ! and his bold bright
eye
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh.

VI.

“ Tell this in some more courtly scene,
To maids and youths in robes of state !
I am a woman poor and mean,
And therefore is my soul elate.
War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled,
That from the aged father tears his child !

VII.

“A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
He kills the sire and starves the son ;
The husband kills, and from her board
Steals all the widow's toil had won ;
Plunders God's world of beauty ; rends away
All safety from the night, all comfort from the
day.

VIII.

“Then wisely is my soul elate,
That strife should vanish, battle cease :
I'm poor and of a low estate,
The Mother of the Prince of Peace.
Joy rises in me like a summer's morn :
Peace, Peace on earth ! the Prince of Peace is
born.”

HUMAN LIFE,

ON THE DENIAL OF IMMORTALITY.

If dead, we cease to be ; if total gloom
Swallow up life's brief flash for aye, we fare
As summer-gusts, of sudden birth and doom,
Whose sound and motion not alone declare,

But are their whole of being! If the breath
Be life itself, and not its task and tent,
If even a soul like Milton's can know death;
O Man! thou vessel purposeless, unmeant,
Yet drone-hive strange of phantom purposes!
Surplus of Nature's dread activity,
Which, as she gazed on some nigh-finished
vase,
Retreating slow, with meditative pause,
She formed with restless hands uncon-
sciously!
Blank accident! nothing's anomaly!
If rootless thus, thus substanceless thy state,
Go, weigh thy dreams, and be thy hopes, thy
fears,
The counter-weights!—Thy laughter and thy
tears
Mean but themselves, each fittest to create,
And to repay the other! Why rejoices
Thy heart with hollow joy for hollow good?
Why cowl thy face beneath the mourner's
hood,
Why waste thy sighs, and thy lamenting voices,
Image of image, ghost of ghostly elf,
That such a thing as thou feel'st warm or cold?
Yet what and whence thy gain, if thou withhold
These costless shadows of thy shadowy self?
Be sad! be glad! be neither! seek, or shun!

Thou hast no reason why ! Thou can'st have
none ;
Thy being's being is contradiction.

SEPARATION.

A SWORDED man whose trade is blood,
In grief, in anger, and in fear,
Through jungle, swamp, and torrent flood,
I seek the wealth you hold so dear !

The dazzling charm of outward form,
The power of gold, the pride of birth,
Have taken a woman's heart by storm—
Usurp'd the place of inward worth.

Is not true love of higher price
Than outward form, though fair to see
Wealth's glittering fairy-dome of ice,
Or echo of proud ancestry ?—

O ! Asra, Asra ! couldst thou see
Into the bottom of my heart,
There's such a mine of love for thee ;
As almost might supply desert !

(This separation is, alas !
Too great a punishment to bear ;
O ! take my life, or let me pass
That life, that happy life, with her !)

The perils, erst with steadfast eye
 Encounter'd, now I shrink to see—
 Oh! I have heart enough to die—
 Not half enough to part from thee!



ON TAKING LEAVE OF —, 1817.

To know, to esteem, to love—and then to part
 Makes up life's tale to many a feeling heart!
 O for some dear abiding place of love,
 O'er which my spirit, like the mother dove,
 Might brood with warming wings!—O fair as
 kind,
 Were but one sisterhood with you combined,
 (Your very image they in shape and mind)
 Far rather would I sit in solitude,
 The forms of memory all my mental food,
 And dream of you, sweet sisters, (ah, not
 mine!)
 And only dream of you, (ah, dream and pine!)
 Than have the presence, and partake the pride,
 And shine in the eye of all the world beside!

THE PANG MORE SHARP THAN ALL.

AN ALLEGORY.

I.

HE too has flitted from his secret nest,
Hope's last and dearest child without a name!—
Has flitted from me, like the warmthless flame,
That makes false promise of a place of rest
To the tir'd pilgrim's still believing mind;—
Or like some elfin knight in kingly court,
Who having won all guerdons in his sport,
Glides out of view, and whither none can find!

II.

Yes! he hath flitted from me—with what aim,
Or why, I know not! 'twas a home of bliss,
And he was innocent, as the pretty shame
Of babe, that tempts and shuns the menaced
kiss,
From its twy-cluster'd hiding place of snow!
Pure as the babe, I ween, and all aglow
As the dear hopes, that swell the mother's
breast—
Her eyes down gazing o'er her clasped charge;
Yet gay as that twice happy father's kiss,

210 THE PANG MORE SHARP THAN ALL

That well might glance aside, yet never miss,
Where the sweet mark emboss'd so sweet a targe—
Twice wretched he who hath been doubly blest !

III.

Like a loose blossom on a gusty night
He flitted from me—and has left behind
(As if to them his faith he ne'er did plight)
Of either sex and answerable mind
Two playmates, twin-births of his foster-
dame :—

The one a steady lad (Esteem he hight)
And Kindness is the gentler sister's name.
Dim likeness now, though fair she be and good
Of that bright boy who hath us all forsook ;—
But in his full-eyed aspect when she stood,
And while her face reflected every look,
And in reflection kindled—she became
So like him, that almost she seem'd the same .

IV.

Ah ! he is gone, and yet will not depart !—
Is with me still, yet I from him exil'd !
For still there lives within my secret heart
The magic image of the magic child,
Which there he made up-grow by his strong art,

THE PANG MORE SHARP THAN ALL. 211

As in that crystal* orb—wise Merlin's feat,—
The wondrous "World of Glass," wherein
 inised

All long'd for things their beings did repeat
And there he left it, like a sylph beguiled,
To live and yearn and languish incomplete!

v.

Can wit of man a heavier grief reveal?
Can sharper pang from hate or scorn arise?—
Yes! one more sharp there is that deeper lies,
Which fond Esteem but mocks when he would
 heal.

Yet neither scorn nor hate did it devise,
But sad compassion and atoning zeal!
One pang more blighting-keen than hope be-
 trayed!

And this it is my woful hap to feel,
When at her brother's hest, the twin-born maid
With face averted and unsteady eyes,
Her truant playmate's faded robe puts on;
And inly shrinking from her own disguise
Enacts the faery boy that's lost and gone.
O worse than all! O pang all pangs above
Is kindness counterfeiting absent love!

* Faerie Queene, B. III. c. 2, s. 19.

THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
It hath not been my use to pray
With moving lips or bended knees :
But silently by slow degrees,
My spirit I to love compose,
In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought express,
Only a sense of supplication ;
A sense o'er all my soul imprest
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, every where
Eternal strength and wisdom are.

But yester-night I prayed aloud
In anguish and in agony,
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me :
A lurid light, a trampling throng,
Sense of intolerable wrong,
And whom I scorned, those only strong !
Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
Still baffled, and yet burning still !
Desire with loathing strangely mixed
On wild or hateful objects fixed.

Fantastic passions ! maddening brawl !
And shame and terror over all !
Deed to be hid which were not hid,
Which all confused I could not know,
Whether I suffered, or I did :
For all seemed guilt, remorse or woe,
My own or others still the same
Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame.

So two nights passed : the night's dismay
Saddened and stunned the coming day.
Sleep, the wide blessing seemed to me
Distemper's worst calamity.
The third night, when my own loud scream
Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,
I wept as I had been a child ;
And having thus by tears subsued
My anguish to a milder mood,
Such punishments, I said, were due
To nature's deepliest stained with sin,-
For aye entempesting anew
The unfathomable hell within
The horror of their deeds to view,
To know and loathe, yet wish and do !
Such griefs with such men well agree,
But wherefore, wherefore fall on me ?
To be beloved is all I need,
And whom I love, I love indeed.

DUTY SURVIVING SELF-LOVE,

THE ONLY SURE FRIEND OF DECLINING LIFE.

A SOLILOQUY.

UNCHANGED within to see all changed without
Is a blank lot and hard to bear, no doubt.
Yet why at others' wanings should'st thou fret?
Then only might'st thou feel a just regret,
Hadst thou withheld thy love or hid thy light
In selfish forethought of neglect and slight.
O wiselier then, from feeble yearnings freed,
While, and on whom, thou may'st—shine on!
nor heed

Whether the object by reflected light
Return thy radiance or absorb it quite:
And though thou notest from thy safe recess
Old friends burn dim, like lamps in noisome air
Love them for what they are; nor love them less
Because to thee they are not what they were.

PHANTOM OR FACT.

A DIALOGUE IN VERSE.

AUTHOR.

A LOVELY form there sate beside my bed,
And such a feeding calm its presence shed,
A tender love so pure from earthly leaven
That I unnethe the fancy might control,
'Twas my own spirit newly come from heaven,
Wooing its gentle way into my soul!
But ah! the change—It had not stirr'd, and
yet—

Alas! that change how fain would I forget!
That shrinking back, like one that had mistook!
That weary, wandering, disavowing look!
'Twas all another, feature, look, and frame,
And still, methought, I knew, it was the same!

FRIEND.

This riddling tale, to what does it belong?
Is't history? vision? or an idle song?
Or rather say at once, within what space
Of time this wild disastrous change took
place?

AUTHOR.

Call it a moment's work, (and such it seems)
This tale's a fragment from the life of dreams;
But say, that years matur'd the silent strife,
And 'tis a record from the dream of life.



PHANTOM.

ALL look and likeness caught from earth,
All accident of kin and birth,
Had pass'd away. There was no trace
Of aught on that illumined face,
Uprais'd beneath the rifted stone
But of one spirit all her own;—
She, she herself, and only she,
Shone thro' her body visibly.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE.

LINES COMPOSED 21ST FEBRUARY, 1827.

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their
lair—

The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar
flow.

Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye
may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams,
away!

With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I
stroll:

And would you learn the spells that drowse my
soul?

Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live.

YOUTH AND AGE.

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
 Both were mine! Life went a maying
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young!

When I was young?—Ah, woful *when!*
 Ah! for the change 'twixt *now* and *then!*
 This breathing house not built with hands,
 This body that does me grievous wrong
 O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
 How lightly then it flashed along:—
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
 On winding lakes and rivers wide,
 That ask no aid of sail or oar,
 That fear no spite of wind or tide!
 Nought cared this body for wind or weather
 When Youth and I liv'd in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like!
 Friendship is a sheltering tree;
 O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
 Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,

Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah, woful *ere*,
 Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!

O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that thou and I were one;
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on
To make believe, that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,

When we are old:

That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismiss,
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP OPPOSITE.

HER attachment may differ from yours in degree,
Provided they are both of one kind;
But Friendship how tender so ever it be
Gives no accord to Love, however refin'd.

Love, that meets not with Love, its true nature revealing,
Grows ashamed of itself, and demurs:
If you cannot lift hers up to your state of feeling,
You must lower down your state to hers.



DESIRE.

WHERE true Love burns, Desire is Love's pure flame;
It is the reflex of our earthly frame,
That takes its meaning from the nobler part,
And but translates the language of the heart.

TO A LADY,

OFFENDED BY A SPORTIVE OBSERVATION THAT
WOMEN HAVE NO SOULS.

NAY, dearest Anna! why so grave?
I said, you had no soul, 'tis true!
For what you are, you cannot have:
'Tis I, that have one since I first had you!



WHY LOVE IS BLIND.

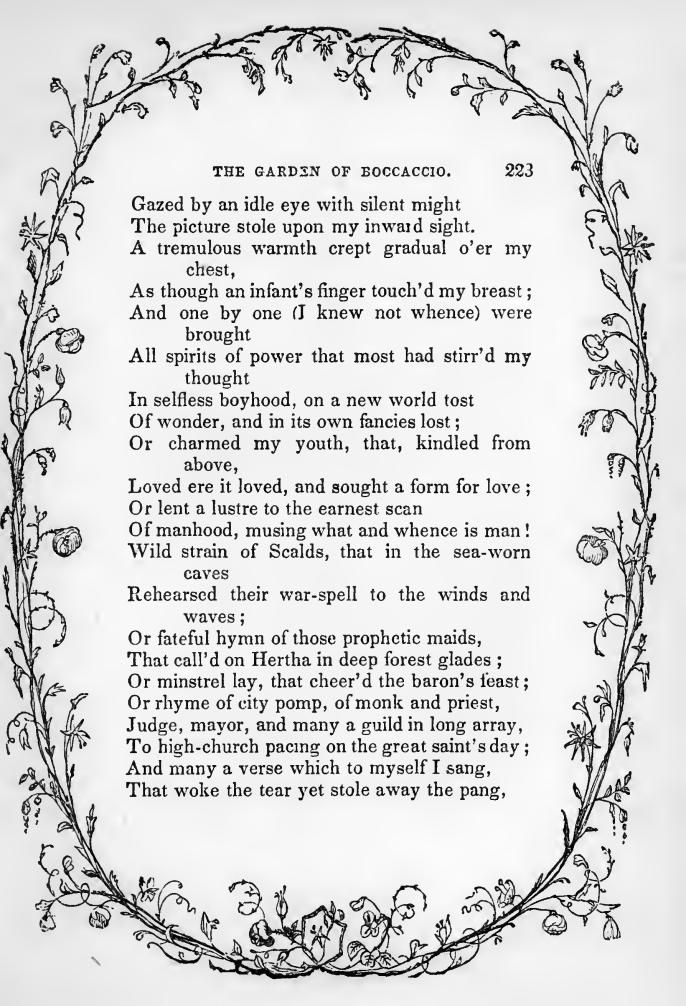
I HAVE heard of reasons manifold
Why Love must needs be blind,
But this the best of all I hold—
His eyes are in his mind.

What outward form and feature are
He guesseth but in part;
But what within is good and fair
He seeth with the heart.

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.

OF late, in one of those most weary hours,
When life seems emptied of all genial powers,
A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has known
May bless his happy lot, I sate alone ;
And from the numbing spell to win relief,
Call'd on the past for thought of glee or grief.
In vain ! bereft alike of grief and glee,
I sate and cover'd o'er my own vacancy !
And as I watched the dull continuous ache,
Which, all else slumbering, seem'd alone to
wake ;

O friend ! long wont to notice yet conceal,
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,
I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
Place on my desk this exquisite design,
Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,
The love, the joyance, and the gallantry !
An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,
Framed in the silent poesy of form ;
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep
Emerging from a mist ; or like a stream
Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,
But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's
dream,



Gazed by an idle eye with silent might
The picture stole upon my inward sight.
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my
chest,
As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast ;
And one by one (I knew not whence) were
brought
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my
thought
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost ;
Or charmed my youth, that, kindled from
above,
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love ;
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man !
Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-worn
caves
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and
waves ;
Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades ;
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast ;
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest,
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day ;
And many a verse which to myself I sang,
That woke the tear yet stole away the pang,

Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.
And last, a matron now, of sober mien,
Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,
Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd
Even in my dawn of thought—Philosophy ;
Though then unconscious of herself, pardie,
She bore no other name than Poesy ;
And, like a gift from heaven, in lifeful glee,
That had but newly left a mother's knee,
Prattled and play'd with bird and flower, and
stone,

As if with elfin playfellows well known,
And life revealed to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist ! now I can descry
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
And all awake ! And now in fix'd gaze stand,
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand ;
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer ;
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop
The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.
I see no longer ! I myself am there,
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing
strings,

And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings :
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
From the high tower, and think that there she
dwells.

With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possessèd,
And breathe an air like life that swells my chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy !
O Florence ! with the Tuscan fields and hills,
And famous Arno, fed with all their rills ;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy !
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.
Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,
And forests, where, beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn :
Palladian palace with its storied halls ;
Fountains. where Love lies listening to their
falls ;

Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
And Nature makes her happy home with man ;
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its
head,

A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn ;—
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine ;
And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance !

Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,
 See! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees
 The new-found roll of old Mæonides;*
 But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
 Peers Ovid's holy book of Love's sweet smart!†

O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,
 Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,
 Where, half conceal'd, the eye of fancy views
 Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious
 to thy muse!

* Boccaccio claimed for himself the glory of having first introduced the works of Homer to his countrymen.

† I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the *Filocolo* of Boccaccio: where the sage instructor, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl Biancofiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the Holy Book, Ovid's Art of Love. "Incominciò Racheo a metter il suo officio in esecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, fece leggere il santo libro d'Ovidio, nel quale il sommo poeta mostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano ne' freddi cuori accendere."

Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks,
And see in Dian's vest between the ranks
Of the trim vines, some maid that half believes
The vestal fires, of which her lover grieves,
With that sly satyr peeping through the leaves!



CHARITY IN THOUGHT.

To praise men as good, and to take them for
such,
Is a grace, which no soul can mete out to a
tittle;—
Of which he who has not a little too much,
Will by charity's gage surely have much too
little.

HUMILITY THE MOTHER OF
CHARITY.

FRAIL creatures are we all! To be the best,
Is but the fewest faults to have:—
Look thou then to thyself, and leave the rest
To God, thy conscience, and the grave.

ON AN INFANT

WHICH DIED BEFORE BAPTISM.

“BE, rather than be called, a child of God,”
 Death whispered!—with assenting nod,
 Its head upon its mother’s breast,
 The baby bowed, without demur—
 Of the kingdom of the blest
 Possessor, not inheritor.



BEARETH ALL THINGS.—2 Cor. xiii. 7.

GENTLY I took that which ungently came,
 And without scorn forgave:—Do thou the same.
 A wrong done to thee think a cat’s eye spark
 Thou would’st not see, were not thine own heart
 dark.
 Thine own keen sense of wrong that thirsts for
 sin,
 Fear that—the spark self-kindled from within,
 Which blown upon, will blind thee with its
 glare,
 Or smother’d, stifle thee with noisome air.
 Clap on the extinguisher, pull up the blinds,

And soon the ventilated spirit finds
 Its natural daylight. If a foe have kenn'd,
 Or worse than foe, an alienated friend,
 A rib of dry rot in thy ship's stout side,
 Think it God's message, and in humble pride
 With heart of oak replace it ;—thine the gains—
 Give him the rotten timber for his pains !



MY BAPTISMAL BIRTH-DAY.

God's child in Christ adopted,—Christ my all,—
 What that earth boasts were not lost cheaply,
 rather

Than forfeit that blest name, by which I call
 The Holy One, the Almighty God, my
 Father ?—

Father ! in Christ we live, and Christ in Thee—
 Eternal Thou, and everlasting We.

The heir of heaven, henceforth I fear not death :
 In Christ I live ! in Christ I draw the breath
 Of the true life !—Let then earth, sea, and sky
 Make war against me ! On my heart I show
 Their mighty Master's seal. In vain they try
 To end my life, than can but end its woe.—
 Is that a death-bed where a Christian lies ?—
 Yes ! but not his—'tis Death itself there dies.

EPITAPH.

STOP, Christian passer-by!—Stop, child of God,
And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seem'd he.—
O, lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C.,
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death!
Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame
He ask'd, and hoped, through Christ. Do thou
the same!

9th November, 1833.



LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-ROOM.

NOR cold, nor stern, my soul! yet I detest
These scented rooms, where, to a gaudy
throng,
Heaves the proud harlot her distended breast,
In intricacies of laborious song.

These feel not Music's genuine power, nor deign
To melt at Nature's passion-warbled plaint;



LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-ROOM. 23

But when the long-breathed singer's uprilled
strain

Bursts in a squall—they gape for wonderment.

Hark! the deep buzz of vanity and hate!

Scornful, yet envious, with self-torturing sneer
My lady eyes some maid of humbler state,
While the pert captain, or the primmer priest,
Prattles accordant scandal in her ear.

O give me, from this heartless scene released,
To hear our old musician, blind and gray,
(Whom stretching from my nurse's arms I
kissed,)

His Scottish tunes and warlike marches play,
By moonshine, on the balmy summer-night,
The while I dance amid the tedded hay
With merry maids, whose ringlets toss in light.

Or lies the purple evening on the bay
Of the calm glossy lake, O let me hide
Unheard, unseen, behind the alder-trees,
For round their roots the fisher's boat is tied,
On whose trim seat doth Edmund stretch at
ease,

And while the lazy boat swings to and fro,
Breathes in his flute sad airs, so wild and slow,
That his own cheek is wet with quiet tears.

But O, dear Anne! when midnight wind careers,

And the gust pelting on the out-house shed
 Makes the cock shrilly on the rain-storm crow,
 To hear thee sing some ballad full of woe,
 Ballad of shipwrecked sailor floating dead,
 Whom his own true-love buried in the sands!
 Thee, gentle woman, for thy voice remeasures
 Whatever tones and melancholy pleasures
 The things of Nature utter; birds or trees
 Or moan of ocean-gale in weedy caves,
 Or where the stiff grass mid the heath-plant
 waves,
 Murmur and music thin of sudden breeze.

TO A LADY.

WITH FALCONER'S "SHIPWRECK."

AH! not by Cam or Isis, famous streams,
 In arched groves, the youthful poet's choice;
 Nor while half-listening, mid delicious dreams,
 To harp and song from lady's hand and voice;
 Nor yet while gazing in sublimer mood
 On cliff, or cataract, in Alpine dell;
 Nor in dim cave with bladdery sea-weed
 strewed,
 Framing wild fancies to the ocean's swell;

Our sea-bard sang this song! which still he
sings,
And sings for thee, sweet friend! Hark,
Pity, hark!
Now mounts, now totters on the tempest's
wings,
Now groans, and shivers, the replunging
bark!

"Cling to the shrouds!" In vain! the breakers
roar—
Death shrieks! With two alone of all his
clan
Forlorn the poet paced the Grecian shore,
No classic roamer, but a shipwrecked man!

Say then, what muse inspired these genial
strains,
And lit his spirit to so bright a flame?
The elevating thought of suffered pains,
Which gentle hearts shall mourn; but chief
the name

Of gratitude! remembrances of friend,
Or absent or no more! shades of the Past,
Which Love makes substance! Hence to thee
I send,
O dear as long as life and memory last!

I send with deep regards of heart and head,
Sweet maid for friendship formed ! this work
to thee :
And thou, the while thou canst not choose but
shed
A tear for Falconer, wilt remember me.

REFLECTIONS

ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF RETIREMENT.

Sermoni propria.—*MOR.*

Low was our pretty cot : our tallest rose
Peeped at the chamber-window. We could hear
At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
Our myrtles blossomed ; and across the porch
Thick jasmins twined : the little landscape round
Was green and woody, and refreshed the eye.
It was a spot which you might aptly call
The Valley of Seclusion ! Once I saw
(Hallowing his sabbath-day by quietness)
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
Bristowa's citizen : methought, it calmed
His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
With wiser feelings : for he paused, and looked
With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around,

Then eyed our cottage, and gazed round again,
And sighed, and said, it was a blessed place.
And we were blessed. Oft with patient ear
Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's note
(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered tones
I've said to my beloved, "Such, sweet girl!
The inobtrusive song of happiness,
Unearthly minstrelsy! then only heard
When the soul seeks to hear; when all is
hushed,
And the heart listens!"

But the time, when first
From that low dell, steep up the stony mount
I climbed with perilous toil and reached the top,
Oh! what a goodly scene! Here the bleak
mount,
The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with
sheep;
Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny
fields;
And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrowed,
Now winding bright and full, with naked banks;
And seats, and lawns, the abbey and the wood,
And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-spire;
The channel there, the islands and white sails,
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless
ocean—

It seemed like Omnipresence! God, methought,
Had built him there a temple: the whole world
Seemed imaged in its vast circumference,
No wish profaned my overwhelmed heart.
Blest hour! It was a luxury,—to be!

Ah! quiet dell! dear cot, and mount sublime!
I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
While my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled,
That I should dream away the entrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
With feelings all too delicate for use?
Sweet is the tear that from some Howard's eye
Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from earth:
And he that works me good with unmoved face,
Does it but half: he chills me while he aids,
My benefactor, not my brother man!
Yet even this, this cold beneficence
Praise, praise it, O my soul! oft as thou
scann'st
The sluggard Pity's vision-weaving tribe!
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the
wretched,
Nursing in some delicious solitude
Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies!
I therefore go, and join head, heart, and hand,
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ.

Yet oft when after honourable toil
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves to dream,
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear cot!
Thy jasmin and thy window-peeping rose,
And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet abode!
Ah!—had none greater! And that all had such!
It might be so—but the time is not yet.
Speed it, O Father! Let thy kingdom come!



IMITATED FROM THE WELSH.

If, while my passion I impart,
You deem my words untrue,
O place your hand upon my heart—
Feel how it throbs for you!

Ah no! reject the thoughtless claim
In pity to your lover!
That thrilling touch would aid the flame
It wishes to discover.

TO AN INFANT.

Ah! cease thy tears and sobs, my little life!
I did but snatch away the unclasped knife:
Some safer toy will soon arrest thine eye,
And to quick laughter change this peevish
cry!

Poor stumbler on the rocky coast of woe,
Tutored by pain each source of pain to know!
Alike the foodful fruit and scorching fire
Awake thy eager grasp and young desire;
Alike the good, the ill offend thy sight,
And rouse the stormy sense of shrill affright!
Untaught, yet wise! mid all thy brief alarms
Thou closely clingest to thy mother's arms,
Nestling thy little face in that fond breast
Whose anxious heavings lull thee to thy rest!

Man's breathing miniature! thou mak'st me
sigh—

A babe art thou—and such a thing am I!
To anger rapid and as soon appeased,
For trifles mourning and by trifles pleased
Break Friendship's mirror with a tetchy blow,
Yet snatch what coals of fire on Pleasure's altar
glow!

O thou that rearest with celestial aim
The future seraph in my mortal frame,
Thrice holy Faith! whatever thorns I meet
As on I totter with unpractised feet,
Still let me stretch my arms and cling to thee,
Meek nurse of souls through their long infancy!



LINES

IN ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM A FRIEND.

Good verse most good, and bad verse then seems
better
Received from absent friend by way of letter.
For what so sweet can laboured lays impart
As one rude rhyme warm from a friendly heart?

ANON

NOR travels my meandering eye
The starry wilderness on high;
Nor now with curious sight
I mark the glowworm as I pass,
Move with "green radiance" through the grass,
An emerald of light.

O ever present to my view!
My wafted spirit is with you,

And soothes your boding fears :
I see you all oppressed with gloom
Sit lonely in that cheerless room—
Ah me! you are in tears!

Beloved woman! did you fly
Chilled Friendship's dark disliking eye,
Or Mirth's untimely din?
With cruel weight these trifles press
A temper sore with tenderness,
When aches the void within.

But why with sable wand unblest
Should Fancy rouse within my breast
Dim-visaged shapes of dread?
Untenanted its beauteous clay
My Sara's soul has winged its way,
And hovers round my head!

I felt it prompt the tender dream,
When slowly sank the day's last gleam;
You roused each gentler sense,
As sighing o'er the blossom's bloom
Meek evening wakes its soft perfume
With viewless influence.

And hark, my love! The sea-breeze moans
Through yon reft house! O'er rolling stones

In bo'd ambitious sweep,
The onward-surgin' tides supply
The sience of the cloudless sky
With mimic thunders deep.

Dark reddening from the channeled Isle*
(Where stands one solitary pile
Unslated by the blast)
The watchfire, like a sullen star
Twinkles to many a dozing tar
Rude cradled on the mast.

Even there—beneath the light-house tower—
In the tumultuous evil hour
Ere peace with Sara came,
Time was, I should have thought it sweet
To count the echoings of my feet,
And watch the storm-vexed flame.

And there in black soul-jaundiced fit
A sad gloom-pampered man to sit,
And listen to the roar :
When mountain surges bellowing deep
With un uncouth monster leap
Plunged foaming on the shore.

* The Holmes, in the Bristol Channel.

Then by the lightning's blaze to mark
Some toiling tempest-shattered bark,
Her vain distress-guns hear;
And when a second sheet of light
Flashed o'er the blackness of the night—
To see no vessel there!

But Fancy now more gaily sings;
Or if awhile she droop her wings,
As sky-larks 'mid the corn,
On summer fields she grounds her breast:
The oblivious poppy o'er her nest
Nods, till returning morn.

O mark those smiling tears, that swell
The opened rose! From heaven they fell,
And with the sun-beam blend.
Blest visitations from above,
Such are the tender woes of love
Fostering the heart they bend!

When stormy midnight howling round
Beats on our roof with clattering sound,
To me your arms you'll stretch:
Great God! you'll say—To us so kind,
O shelter from this loud bleak wind
The houseless, friendless wretch!

The tears that tremble down your cheek,
Shall bathe my kisses chaste and meek

In Pity's dew divine ;
And from your heart the sighs that steal
Shall make your rising bosom feel
The answering swell of mine !

How oft, my love ! with shapings sweet
I paint the moment, we shall meet !
With eager speed I dart—
I seize you in the vacant air,
And fancy, with a husband's care
I press you to my heart !

'Tis said, in summer's evening hour
Flashes the golden-coloured flower,
A fair electric flame :
And so shall flash my love-charged eye
When all the heart's big ecstasy
Shoots rapid through the frame !

LINES,

WRITTEN AT THE KING'S ARMS, ROSS, FORMERLY
THE HOUSE OF "THE MAN OF ROSS."

RICHER than the misers o'er their countless
hoards,
Nobler than kings, or king-polluted lords,
Here dwelt the Man of Ross. O trav'ler, hear!
Departed merit claims a reverent tear.
If 'neath this roof thy wine-cheer'd moments
pass,
Fill to the good man's name one grateful glass:
To higher zest shall mem'ry wake thy soul,
And virtue mingle in th' ennobled bowl.
But if, like mine, thro' life's distressful scene,
Lonely and sad thy pilgrimage hath been;
And if, thy breast with heart-sick anguish
fraught,
Thou journeyest onward, tempest-tossed in
thought;
Here cheat thy cares! in gen'rous visions melt,
And dream of goodness, thou hast never felt!

KISSES.

CUPID, if storying legends tell aright,
Once fram'd a rich Elixir of Delight.
A Chalice o'er love-kindled flames he fix'd,
And in it nectar and ambrosia mix'd:
With these the magic dew's which Evening
brings,
Brush'd from the Idalian star by faery wings:
Each tender pledge of sacred Faith he join'd,
Each gentler pleasure of th' unspotted mind—
'Day-dreams, whose tints with sportive bright-
ness glow,
And Hope, the blameless parasite of Woe.
The eyeless Chemist heard the process rise,
The steady Chalice bubbled up in sighs;
Sweet sounds transpir'd, as when the enamour'd
dove
Pours the soft murm'ring of responsive love.
The finish'd work might Envy vainly blame,
And 'Kisses' was the precious compound's
name.
With half the God his Cyprian Mother blest,
And breath'd on Sara's lovelier lips the rest.

THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

PREFATORY NOTE.

A prose composition, one not in metre at least, seems *prima facie* to require explanation or apology. It was written in the year 1798, near Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, at which place (*sanctum et amabile nomen!* rich by so many associations and recollections) the author had taken up his residence in order to enjoy the society and close neighbourhood of a dear and honoured friend, T. Poole, Esq. The work was to have been written in concert with another, whose name is too venerable within the precincts of genius to be unnecessarily brought into connexion with such a trifle, and who was then residing at a small distance from Nether Stowey. The title and subject were suggested by myself, who likewise drew out the scheme and the contents for each of the three books or cantos, of which the work was to consist, and which, the reader is to be informed, was to have been finished in one night! My partner undertook the first canto: I the second: and whichever had done first, was to set about the third. Almost thirty years gave passed by; yet at this moment I cannot without something more than a smile, moot the question which of the two things was the more impracticable, for a mind so eminently original to compose another man's thoughts and fancies, or

for a taste so austere pure and simple to imitate the Death of Abel? Methinks I see his grand and noble countenance as at the moment when having despatched my own portion of the task at full finger-speed, I hastened to him with my manuscript—that look of humorous despondency fixed on his almost blank sheet of paper, and then its silent mock-piteous admission of failure struggling with the sense of the exceeding ridiculousness of the whole scheme—which broke up in a laugh: and the Ancient Mariner was written instead.

Years afterward, however, the draft of the plan and proposed incidents, and the portion executed, obtained favour in the eyes of more than one person, whose judgment on a poetic work could not but have weighed with me, even though no parental partiality had been thrown into the same scale, as a make-weight. and I determined on commencing anew, and composing the whole in stanzas, and made some progress in realizing this intention, when adverse gales drove my bark off the “Fortunate Isles” of the Muses: and then other and more momentous interests prompted a different voyage, to firmer anchorage and a securer port. I have in vain tried to recover the lines from the palimpsest tablet of my memory: and I can only offer the introductory stanza, which had been committed to writing for the purpose of procuring a friend’s judgment on the metre, as a specimen.

Encinctured with a twine of leaves,
That leafy twine his only dress!
A lovely boy was plucking fruits,

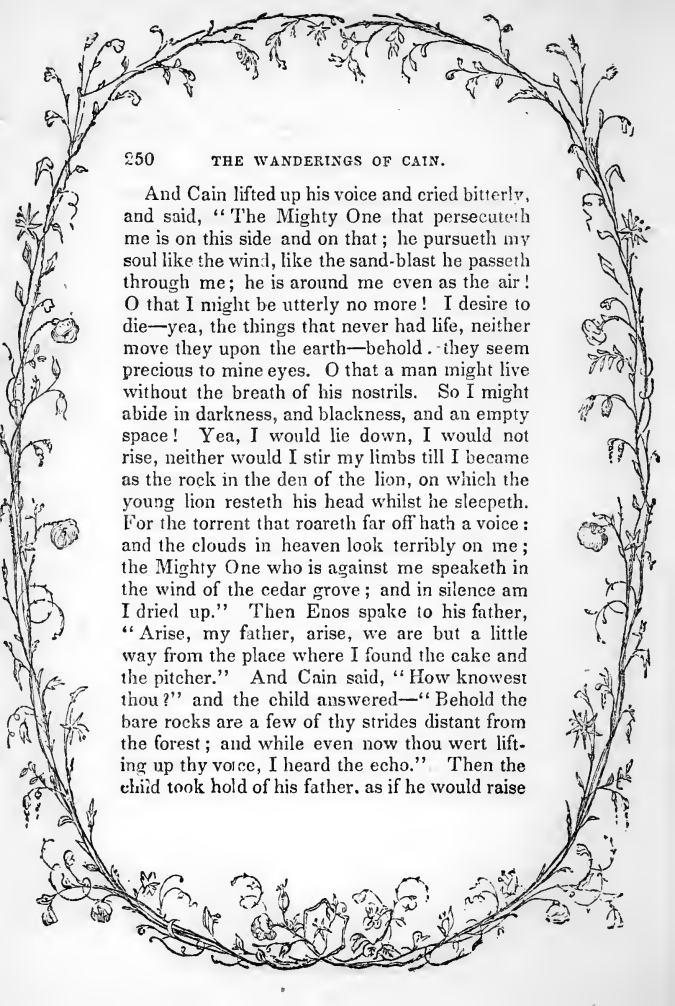
By moonlight, in a wilderness.
The moon was bright, the air was free,
And fruits and flowers together grew
On many a shrub and many a tree :
And all put on a gentle hue,
Hanging in the shadowy air
Like a picture rich and rare.
It was a climate where, they say,
The night is more belov'd than day.
But who that beauteous boy beguil'd,
That beauteous boy to linger here ?
Alone, by night, a little child,
In place so silent and so wild—
Has he no friend, no loving mother near ?

CANTO II.

“A LITTLE further, O my father, yet a little further, and we shall come into the open moonlight.” Their road was through a forest of fir-trees ; at its entrance the trees stood at distances from each other, and the path was broad, and the moonlight and the moonlight shadows reposed upon it, and appeared quietly to inhabit that solitude. But soon the path winded and became narrow ; the sun at high noon sometimes speckled, but never illumined it, and now it was dark as a cavern.

"It is dark, O my father!" said Enos, "but the path under our feet is smooth and soft, and we shall soon come out into the open moonlight."

"Lead on, my child!" said Cain: "guide me, little child!" And the innocent little child clasped a finger of the hand which had murdered the righteous Abel, and he guided his father. "The fir branches drip upon thee, my son." "Yea, pleasantly, father, for I ran fast and eagerly to bring thee the pitcher and the cake, and my body is not yet cool. How happy the squirrels are that feed on these fir-trees! they leap from bough to bough, and the old squirrels play round their young ones in the nest. I clomb a tree yesterday at noon, O my father, that I might play with them, but they leaped away from the branches, even to the slender twigs did they leap, and in a moment I beheld them on another tree. Why, O my father, would they not play with me? I would be good to them as thou art good to me: and I groaned to them even as thou groonest when thou givest me to eat, and when thou coverest me at evening, and as often as I stand at thy knee and thine eyes look at me?" Then Cain stopped, and stifling his groans he sank to the earth, and the child Enos stood in the darkness beside him.



And Cain lifted up his voice and cried bitterly, and said, "The Mighty One that persecuteth me is on this side and on that; he pursueth my soul like the wind, like the sand-blast he passeth through me; he is around me even as the air! O that I might be utterly no more! I desire to die—yea, the things that never had life, neither move they upon the earth—behold. they seem precious to mine eyes. O that a man might live without the breath of his nostrils. So I might abide in darkness, and blackness, and an empty space! Yea, I would lie down, I would not rise, neither would I stir my limbs till I became as the rock in the den of the lion, on which the young lion resteth his head whilst he sleepeth. For the torrent that roareth far off hath a voice: and the clouds in heaven look terribly on me; the Mighty One who is against me speaketh in the wind of the cedar grove; and in silence am I dried up." Then Enos spake to his father, "Arise, my father, arise, we are but a little way from the place where I found the cake and the pitcher." And Cain said, "How knowest thou?" and the child answered—"Behold the bare rocks are a few of thy strides distant from the forest; and while even now thou wert lifting up thy voice, I heard the echo." Then the child took hold of his father, as if he would raise

him: and Cain being faint and feeble rose slowly on his knees and pressed himself against the trunk of a fir, and stood upright and followed the child.

The path was dark till within three strides' length of its termination, when it turned suddenly; the thick black trees formed a low arch, and the moonlight appeared for a moment like a dazzling portal. Enos ran before and stood in the open air; and when Cain, his father, emerged from the darkness, the child was affrighted. For the mighty limbs of Cain were wasted as by fire; his hair was as the matted curls on the bison's forehead, and so glared his fierce and sullen eye beneath: and the black abundant locks on either side, a rank and tangled mass, were stained and scorched, as though the grasp of a burning iron hand had striven to rend them; and his countenance told in a strange and terrible language, of agonies that had been, and were, and were still to continue to be.

The scene around was desolate; as far as the eye could reach it was desolate: the bare rocks faced each other, and left a long and wide interval of thin white sand. You might wander on and look round and round, and peep into the crevices of the rocks and discover nothing that acknowledged the influence of the seasons.

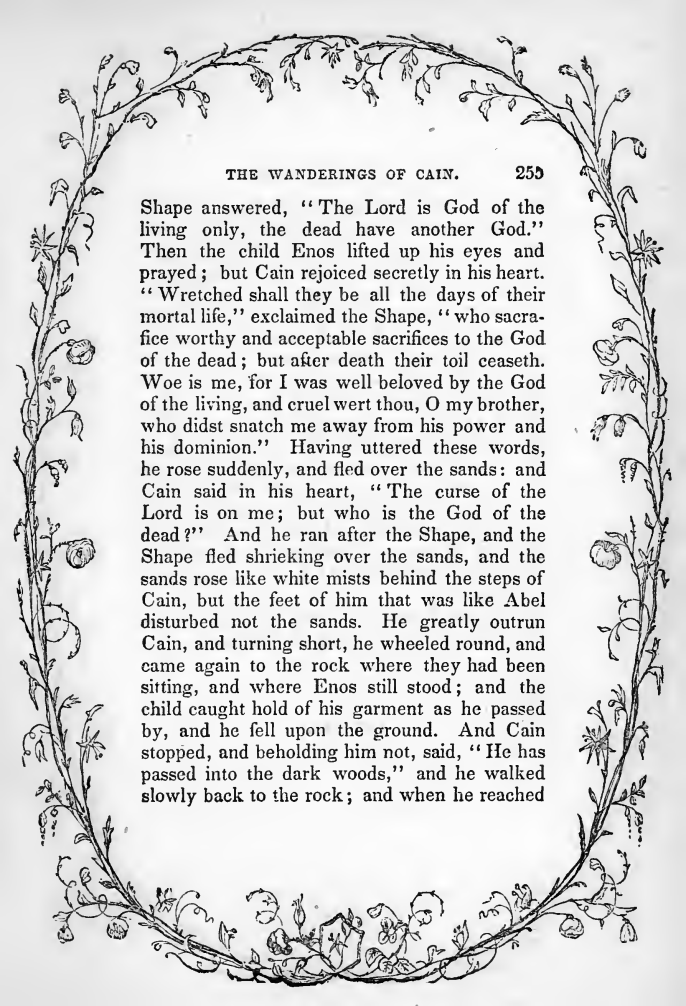
There was no spring, no summer, no autumn : and the winter's snow, that would have been lovely, fell not on these hot rocks and scorching sands. Never morning lark had poised himself over this desert ; but the huge serpent often hissed there beneath the talons of the vulture, and the vulture screamed, his wings imprisoned within the coils of the serpent. The pointed and shattered summits of the ridges of the rocks made a rude mimicry of human concerns, and seemed to prophesy mutely of things that then were not ; steeples, and battlements, and ships with naked masts. As far from the wood as a boy might sling a pebble of the brook, there was one rock by itself at a small distance from the main ridge. It had been precipitated there perhaps by the groan which the Earth uttered when our first father fell. Before you approached, it appeared to lie flat on the ground, but its base slanted from its point, and between its point and the sands, a tall man might stand upright. It was here that Enos had found the pitcher and cake, and to this place he led his father. But ere they had reached the rock they beheld a human shape : his back was towards them, and they were advancing unperceived, when they heard him smite his breast and cry aloud, " Woe is me ! woe is me ! I must never

die again, and yet I am perishing with thirst and hunger."

Pallid, as the reflection of the sheeted lightning on the heavy-sailing night-cloud, became the face of Cain; but the child Enos took hold of the shaggy skin, his father's robe, and raised his eyes to his father, and listening whispered, "Ere yet I could speak, I am sure, O my father, that I heard that voice. Have I not often said that I remembered a sweet voice? O my father! this is it:" and Cain trembled exceedingly. The voice was sweet indeed, but it was thin and querulous, like that of a feeble slave in misery, who despairs altogether, yet can not refrain himself from weeping and lamentation. And, behold! Enos glided forward, and creeping softly round the base of the rock, stood before the stranger, and looked up into his face. And the Shape shrieked, and turned round, and Cain beheld him, that his limbs and his face were those of his brother Abel whom he had killed! And Cain stood like one who struggles in his sleep because of the exceeding terribleness of a dream.

Thus as he stood in silence and darkness of soul, the Shape fell at his feet, and embraced his knees, and cried out with a bitter outcry, "Thou eldest born of Adam, whom Eve, my

mother, brought forth, cease to torment me! I was feeding my flocks in green pastures by the side of quiet rivers, and thou killedst me; and now I am in misery." Then Cain closed his eyes, and hid them with his hands; and again he opened his eyes, and looked around him, and said to Enos, "What beholdest thou? Didst thou hear a voice, my son?" "Yes, my father, I beheld a man in unclean garments, and he uttered a sweet voice, full of lamentation." Then Cain raised up the Shape that was like Abel, and said:—"The Creator of our father, who had respect unto thee, and unto thy offering, wherefore hath he forsaken thee?" Then the Shape shrieked a second time, and rent his garment, and his naked skin was like the white sands beneath their feet; and he shrieked yet a third time, and threw himself on his face upon the sand that was black with the shadow of the rock, and Cain and Enos sate beside him; the child by his right hand, and Cain by his left. They were all three under the rock, and within the shadow. The Shape that was like Abel raised himself up, and spake to the child: "I know where the cold waters are, but I may not drink, wherefore didst thou then take away my pitcher?" But Cain said, "Didst thou not find favour in the sight of the Lord thy God?" The

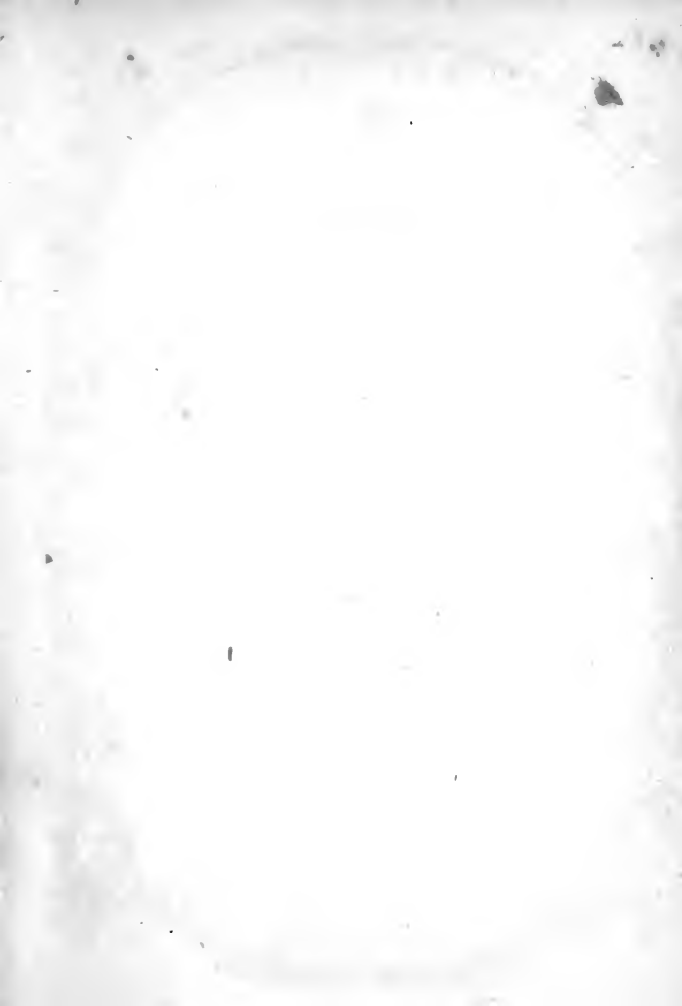


Shape answered, "The Lord is God of the living only, the dead have another God." Then the child Enos lifted up his eyes and prayed; but Cain rejoiced secretly in his heart. "Wretched shall they be all the days of their mortal life," exclaimed the Shape, "who sacrifice worthy and acceptable sacrifices to the God of the dead; but after death their toil ceaseth. Woe is me, for I was well beloved by the God of the living, and cruel wert thou, O my brother, who didst snatch me away from his power and his dominion." Having uttered these words, he rose suddenly, and fled over the sands: and Cain said in his heart, "The curse of the Lord is on me; but who is the God of the dead?" And he ran after the Shape, and the Shape fled shrieking over the sands, and the sands rose like white mists behind the steps of Cain, but the feet of him that was like Abel disturbed not the sands. He greatly outrun Cain, and turning short, he wheeled round, and came again to the rock where they had been sitting, and where Enos still stood; and the child caught hold of his garment as he passed by, and he fell upon the ground. And Cain stopped, and beholding him not, said, "He has passed into the dark woods," and he walked slowly back to the rock; and when he reached

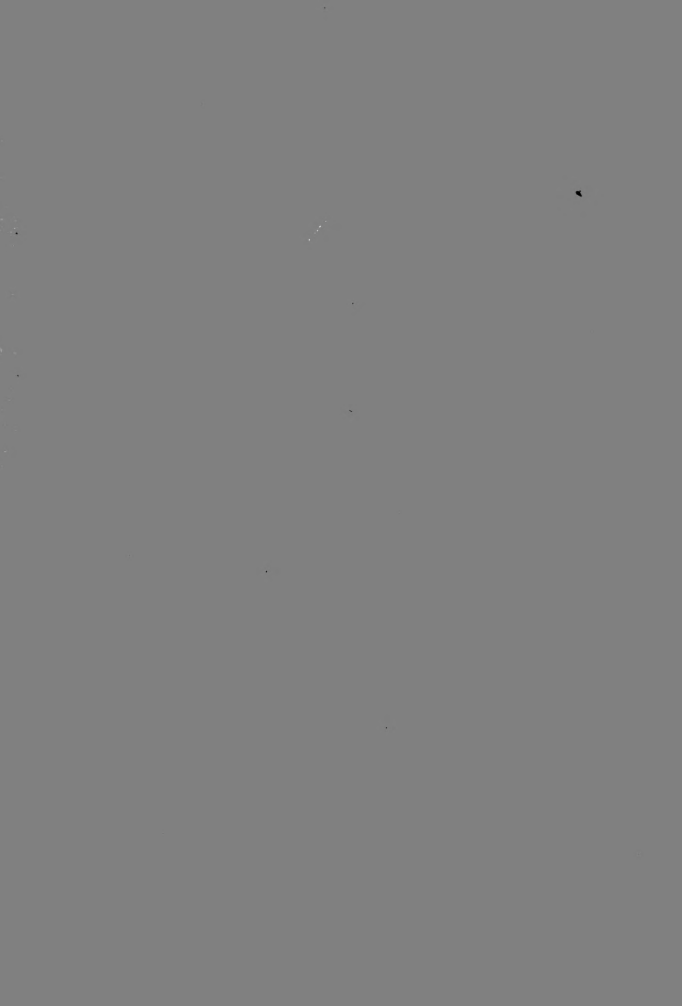
it the child told him that he had caught hold of his garment as he passed by, and that the man had fallen upon the ground: and Cain once more sate beside him, and said, "Abel, my brother, I would lament for thee, but that the spirit within me is withered, and burnt up with extreme agony. Now, I pray thee, by thy flocks, and by thy pastures, and by the quiet rivers which thou lovedst, that thou tell me all that thou knowest. Who is the God of the dead? where doth he make his dwelling? what sacrifices are acceptable unto him? for I have offered, but have not been received; I have prayed, and have not been heard; and how can I be afflicted more than I already am?" The Shape arose and answered, "O that thou hadst had pity on me as I will have pity on thee. Follow me, son of Adam! and bring thy child with thee!"

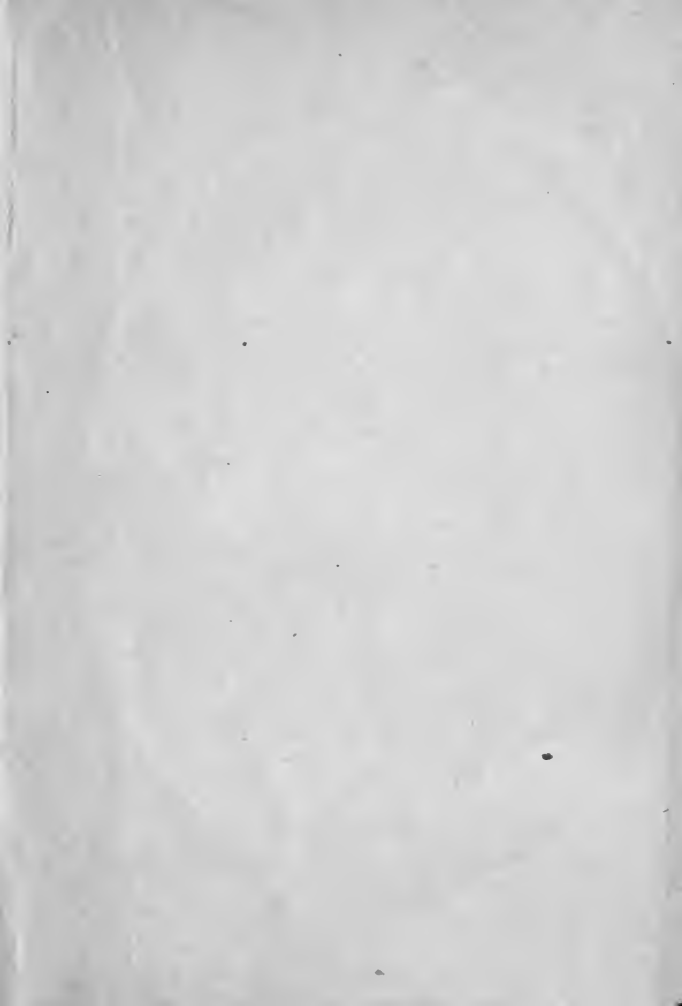
And they three passed over the white sands between the rocks, silent as the shadows.

THE END.









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